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OF DECORATIVE
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SpiderLath pg. 65

Positive Reinforcement pg. 32

Vol. 11 No. 8 November/December 2011

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MEMBER OF



publisher's **LETTER**

Dear Readers,

It's a hunch, but I predict that 2012 is going to bring noticeable improvements for companies involved in decorative concrete. This optimism is based partly on feedback from my recent visits to numerous product manufacturers around the country and on feedback from contractors and supply stores who are seeing steady increases in business and estimating activity for projects of all sizes. Again, it's just a hunch, but I think this increased activity is due in part to steady market improvements, a growing demand for concrete products and an upcoming election year.

Aside from the fact that election years usher in overall increases in consumer spending, a renewed sense of optimism has many times given a sluggish economy the jump-start it needs. Similarly, your own optimism can pay off big time if you have a strategic plan in place for the new year. Decorative concrete can compete with many established building trades, so having the right mix of products and services ready to roll in your geographic area will serve you well even if the construction market remains lukewarm.

At *Concrete Decor* we have spent the past several months making refinements to the magazine's new design. These changes will go into effect with the January 2012 issue. You'll also discover some nice changes at ConcreteDecor.net as we reorganize content, making it easier to find answers quickly regarding nearly every kind of decorative concrete application.

Also in store for 2012, we've developed an outstanding lineup of educational opportunities that are being offered at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show in San Antonio the week of February 20-24. This year's event offers more than 60 educational opportunities. In addition to technical and business seminars covering all aspects of decorative concrete, a number of hands-on workshops will transform San Antonio's popular Say Si arts institute. New to the program in 2012 is the Green Matters Conference, which I strongly encourage you to take part in. Knowing how to answer critical new questions from your clientele on sustainability and green building practices will reward your company and further distinguish you from the competition. See the Show Preview that came with this issue for details.

Lastly, I have a pearl of wisdom to share with you. At my parents' church last Sunday, the pastor made a great comment in the context of his discussion on overcoming adversity. He said: "We don't change when we see the light, we change when we feel the heat." It's my conviction that these economic woes are a big opportunity for decorative concrete. We simply need to embrace this truth and diligently work hard to achieve our goals.

Happy Holidays,

Bent Mikkelsen
Publisher



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by *Chris Sullivan*

On the cover: Deco-Crete Supply, of Orrville, Ohio, poured the half-round steps at this Medina, Ohio, home. Deco-Crete owner Jason Geiser tells how to create these steps in a story on page 14.

Photo courtesy of Deco-Crete Supply

LIFETIME ADHESION WARRANTY



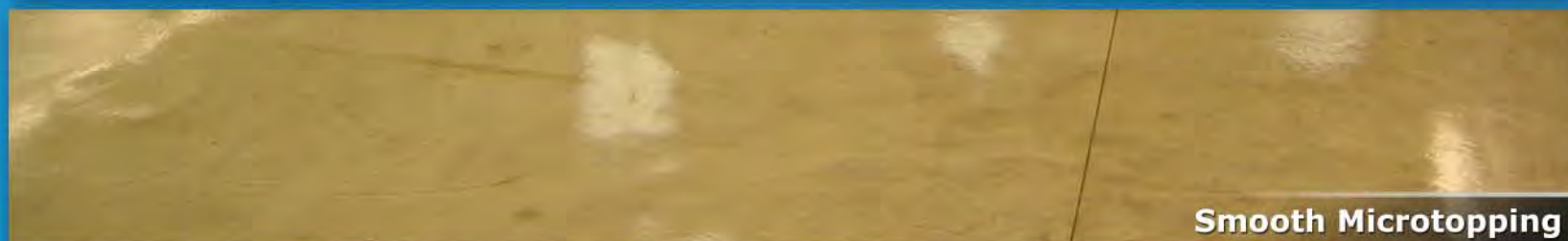
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Provide Free Extras Instead of Dropping Your Prices

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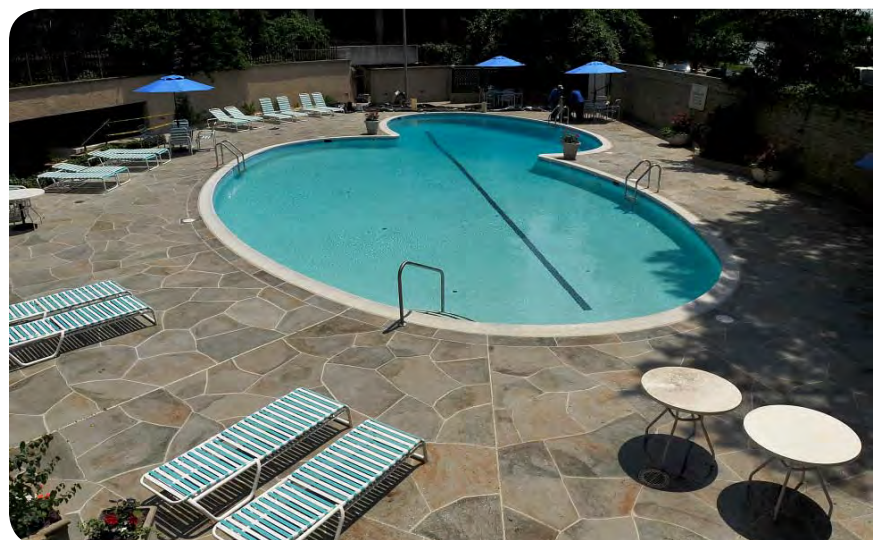
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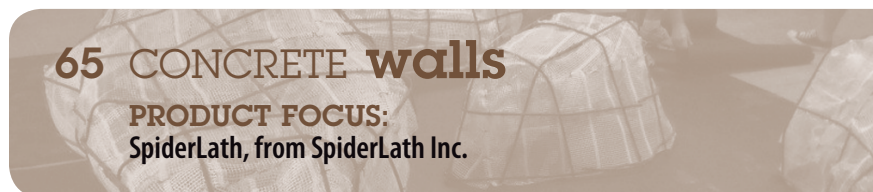
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SpiderLath, from SpiderLath Inc.



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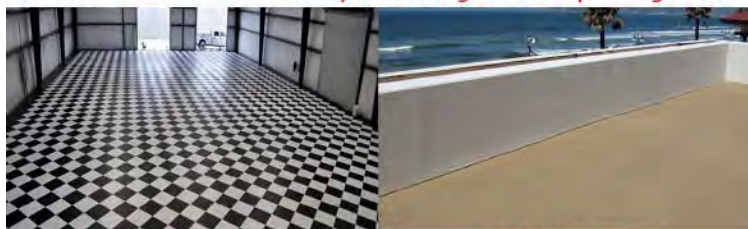


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Sherry A. Boyd is conference director for the Green Matters Conference at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show. A USGBC member, she gained knowledge of the decorative concrete market from eight years as head of marketing for a leading manufacturer of concrete coloring materials. Email her at sboyd@protradeub.com. See Sherry's column, "Green Matters," on page 20.



Doug Carlton operates Carlton Concrete Inc. in Visalia, Calif. He can be reached at carltondoug@comcast.net. See Doug's column, "Carlton's Corner," on page 23.



Jennifer A. Faller has been in the surface preparation industry for the past 15 years as a decorative concrete contractor, technical consultant and owner of a distribution company. Currently, she is business development manager for Vexcon Chemicals and lead trainer for the Certi-Shine brand of polished concrete materials. Contact her at jfaller@vexcon.com. See Jennifer's article on page 45.



Jason Geiser owns Deco-Crete Supply and Cornerstone Concrete Designs, based in Orrville, Ohio. He is a member of the American Society of Concrete Contractors Decorative Concrete Council, the Ohio Concrete Ready Mix Association and a local homebuilders' association. Reach him at jason@deco-cretesupply.com. See Jason's feature article on page 14.



Jeffrey Girard is founder and president of The Concrete Countertop Institute. He can be reached at info@concretecountertopinstitute.com. See Jeffrey's column, "Success with Concrete Countertops," on page 32.



Chris Sullivan is vice president of sales and marketing with ChemSystems Inc. He has led seminars and product demonstrations throughout North America. Contact him at trowelanderror@protradeub.com. See Chris' column, "Trowel & Error," on page 8.

business & INDUSTRY

INDUSTRY NEWS

Kut-Rite obtains rights to PathFinder vacuum technology and dust shroud

Kut-Rite has acquired the rights to PathFinder Concepts' patent-pending vacuum technology and the EdgeFinder Dust Shroud.

Kut-Rite plans to market the vacuum technology as KleanRite "Reverse Flow" moving forward. The KleanRite brand has been a successful brand for Kut-Rite for many years and already incorporates the private-labeled PathFinder vacuum technology.

www.kutritemfg.com

PCA sustainability standards address high-performance buildings

To allow local governments to adopt green building codes that address high-performance as well as conventional sustainable features, the Portland Cement Association and the Institute for Business and Home Safety have developed High Performance Building Requirements for Sustainability 2.0.

The criteria are written in mandatory language that amends and appends the International Code Council International Building Code. The provisions are generic and do not endorse one specific material over another.

www.cement.org

Malisch receives ASCC highest honor

Ward R. Malisch, technical director at the American Society of Concrete Contractors, received the ASCC's Lifetime Achievement Award. The organization's highest honor acknowledges recipients for their body of work within the industry and their service to ASCC.

Malisch has answered the ASCC



technical telephone hotline for 25 years. In addition to the hotline, his work on ASCC's behalf includes 62 Troubleshooting Newsletters, 36 Position Statements, numerous technical bulletins and articles, multiple presentations, representation on industry committees, research projects, and co-authoring Tolerances for Cast-in-Place Concrete Buildings.

Malisch has taught engineering at several universities and worked in quality control for Daniel Construction Co. (now Fluor Corp.). He was the editor of Concrete Construction magazine for 14 years, served as director of construction information services for the Portland Cement Association, and was a senior managing director of the American Concrete Institute. He will present "Green Concrete Effects on Concrete Contractors" as part of the Green Matters Conference at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show.

[\(866\) 788-2722](tel:(866)788-2722)

www.ascconline.org

Cloud wins kudos from NPCA

Darryl Cloud has received the National Precast Concrete Association's highest award, the Robert E. Yaokum Award.

Since coming to Concrete Sealants, an Ohio-based NPCA member company that manufactures sealants, primers, wraps and coatings for precast concrete products, Cloud has left an indelible mark on his colleagues and his customers. Service and volunteering has been a central theme throughout Cloud's life, whether it's service to his country, those in need, his employer or the industry as a whole.

As a dedicated NPCA member, he has also applied his ethic of service to the association. He served on the board of directors from 2003 to 2006 and is a member of the Onsite Wastewater Product Committee.

www.precast.org

BASF honored with 2011 Project of the Year Award from ICRI

BASF's Building Systems business, together with ConTech Construction, of Winter Garden, Fla., was honored with the prestigious International Concrete Repair Institute's 2011 Project of the Year Award for their work on the Royal Floridian Resort restoration in Ormond Beach, Fla.

Projects are judged based on uniqueness, use of state-of-the-art methods, use of materials, functionality, value engineering and aesthetics.

www.buildingsystems.basf.com

Architectural specs available for Engrave-A-Crete processes

Engrave-A-Crete Inc. has announced that Decorative Concrete Engraving and Finishing System Architectural Specifications are now accessible on the company website.

The architectural specifications are provided under Section 033500 in the CSI-accepted three-part format. They were written by a team of architects and decorative concrete engravers.

www.engraveacrete.com

Oregon DC contractor changes hands

Ben Cunin recently purchased Coulee Concrete, of Lake Oswego, Ore. Cunin has more than a decade of experience working with architectural concrete and has trained with many industry leaders, including Fu-Tung Cheng and Buddy Rhodes.

www.couleeconcrete.com

Correction

The photo in "Tales of the Tape," in the Coating & Topping Concrete section of our October 2011 issue, was published courtesy of Couture Concrete Systems.

business & INDUSTRY

TROWEL & ERROR

Funny, Absurd and Just Off the Wall: The Year in Review

Yes, it's that time of year again. The days are growing shorter and the leaves are off the trees, being blown around — and into your concrete work — by the forthcoming winds of winter.



by Chris Sullivan

This is the time of year when I reminisce in my column about questions and job situations I have dealt with over the past year. As in years past, there are those that are funny, absurd and just off the wall. As always, the names have been omitted to protect the innocent.

Let's start with an example of what I like to categorize as the "ask everyone and anyone" type of question. This is from a person who hits the Internet intent on finding a solution to his or her problem, putting it out there on any and every blog hoping someone will respond. Never mind that most of the forums the question ends up in have nothing whatsoever to do with the question being asked. This came across

my desk in early 2011:

"My house has poor drainage in the yard — and limited remedies as a bike path was installed before final grading. Bad gutters too. Discovered 20 ft crack, 1/8-inch wide in my concrete foundation located between 2 support iron beams Just appeared. Is my house going to collapse? Thanks."

I actually get a fair amount of these types of questions. It just comes with the territory when you write a column in a question-and-answer format. In all honesty, I love questions like this. They make me a more educated writer, since these types of questions have nothing to do with decorative concrete, and I often find myself having to research to find answers.

When the questions are outside my area of expertise, I encourage the author to contact an engineer or specialist in that area of concrete, and I let them know that we will be here when they have a question involving decorative concrete. I will also say that I have often wondered how a bike path ended up running through that yard.

Next up on our year-in-review journey is an example of the jobs that make you

cringe, the projects that, looking back, should never have been started. The wrong material was selected, or the installer was in over their head. Placing near the top of the class of 2011 was a project involving a stampable overlay going down over an existing patio at the back of an upscale residence. The installer was a super-nice guy with years of stamped concrete experience. But as many of you know, stamped concrete experience does not directly correlate to stamped overlay experience.

In a nutshell, the product was mixed to a consistency just thicker than water, and the problems started to arise when it took about nine hours for the product to set up. As you can imagine, there were lots of shrinkage cracks, and the material was pretty soft and dusty when it finally did cure — days later.

While this job was unfortunately just one of many disasters in 2011, it deserved mention not only because of the disastrous result (25 bags of overlay had to be removed), but also because of how the end result was handled. The installer did not throw a fit or lay blame on others, but rather asked for help, realized the errors that had been made, and told the client that

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he would be glad to redo the project, using the same material (properly) without asking for additional money. In my book that installer not only graduated from the school of hard knocks with straight A's, but shared a lesson in personal responsibility and standing behind your work — no matter the results — that this industry needs more of.

Without fail every year I get at least one DIYer looking to save some money and attempt a decorative project that is so far over their head and ability it boggles the mind. The winner this year goes to Jane Doe trying to improve her home in Mexico:

"Live in Mexico, limited expertise here in this, so looking at a DIY project. Going to be stamping about 3,200 square feet of exterior concrete, driveway, parking area, walkways and patios. To stamp with a mold, what products are necessary? Do I need a product that will release the polyurethane mold, or will it be sufficient to stamp on very wet cement? Does the cement mixture have to include some quicklime in order for an acid stain to 'stick' later on? After stamping, how much time can I wait before staining and sealing? Thanks! I'm just

starting this project. Have to do it in stages for economic reasons. Overwhelmed by all the information online."

I love the enthusiasm, but talk about chewing off more than you can handle. I have to say that each year I see DIYers pull off projects that I would have given them virtually no chance of completing, let alone making the work look good. But trying to teach someone who has no concrete experience how to stamp 3,200 square feet of concrete via an email would have been a bit over the top. I gave her some basic background information and encouraged her to find a way to hire the job out.

The Internet has opened the doors of the decorative concrete industry to a large mass of nonconcrete professionals willing to give it a try. There are so many videos, blogs and forums that are just a click away, making it seem possible that someone could learn how to stamp concrete or stain an overlay in 30 minutes or less. I often wonder if this is a good thing or just dilutes our industry. In the end I should probably practice what I preach and worry less about what the competition is doing, Internet included, and

more about what I can do to improve my business. Funny though, how more of my time each year is Internet- and electronic media-focused.

I love fielding questions, helping people solve problems and sharing my knowledge with anyone willing to listen or sit still long enough to read. We are all working through some tough times in the decorative concrete industry. Keep your chin up, do good work and don't forget to smile and laugh every once in a while. The world will be a better place for it. I look forward to talking with you in 2012. 📧

Chris Sullivan is vice president of sales and marketing with ChemSystems Inc. He has led seminars and product demonstrations throughout North America. Contact him at trowelandererror@protradepub.com.

Chris Sullivan will offer several courses and participate in a panel at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show. For more information, go to ConcreteDecorShow.com.



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Photos courtesy of Staintec



Glen Roman, Staintec Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.

by *Natasha Chilingirian*

Glen Roman would rather walk away from a project opportunity than put his name on a risky installation. “Sometimes the best money you ever make is from the job you didn’t do,” he says.

A former trainer for Brickform and current consultant and installer for his own company, Staintec, Roman has followed a philosophy of candid communication throughout his professional life. Whether he’s talking to a client about a staining job or educating a contractor on project management, Roman believes upfront, sometimes brutal honesty is the best policy.

Roman, 47, began his career at Brickform in 1998 as a graphic designer. There, he introduced an application that would become his first decorative concrete niche: sandblast stenciling, which involves creating computer-cut, adhesive stencils used for sandblasting materials onto concrete surfaces. He developed designs for Brickform to use in the company’s custom sandblast stenciling applications and eventually headed out into the field to learn a variety of other application techniques from industry veterans.

One mentor in particular stood out for Roman: Bob Freis, who was president and owner of Brickform. Freis presented him with opportunities that opened valuable doors in his career, Roman says.

“I was very fortunate to have met Bob when I did,” he says. “He saw the creative and limitless design potential in sandblast stenciling, so he immediately put me in an

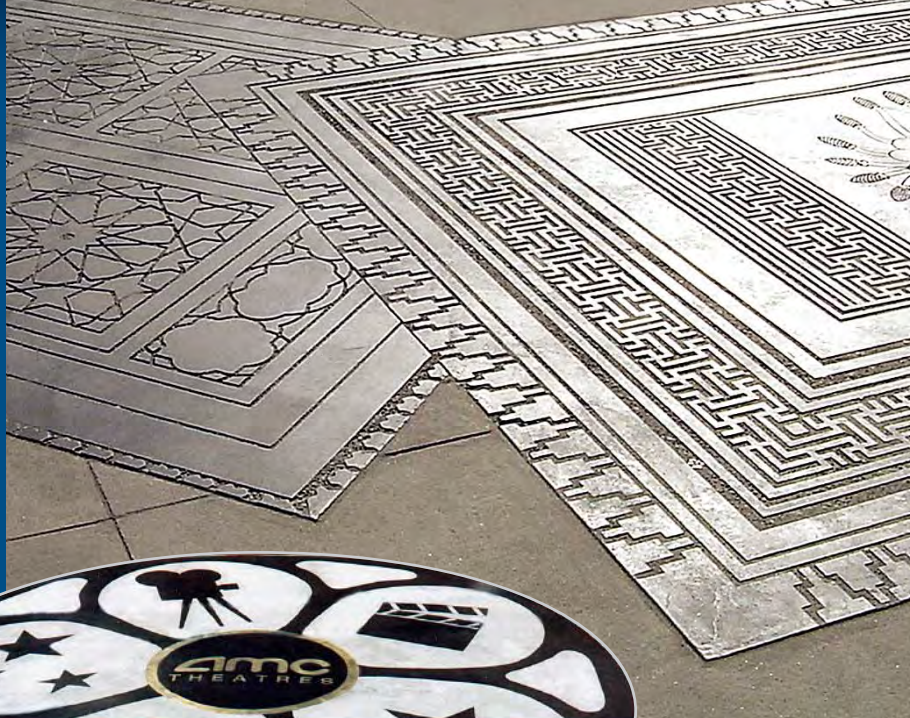
upper-level position at the company. I was immersed in a lot of high-end concrete projects on a daily basis, and without all that exposure, I wouldn’t be where I am today. I owe my entire industry career to Bob. Working at Brickform was truly a life-changing experience.”

With direction and support from Freis, Roman became an expert in Brickform’s products and application methods, which included stamping, acid staining and color hardener and release agent application. He then entered a new role: traveling throughout the United States, Europe, China and Vietnam to share his skills in decorative concrete applications and project management. He trained contractors on Brickform’s product line, giving presentations, providing on-site project support and leading classes and workshops.

Roman, who had no previous teaching experience, says he found a niche as an instructor.

“I really enjoy interacting and traveling, and I know a lot about how these products work, and I guess I articulated that in a way most installers understand,” he says. “When I’m out in the field with the guys, I teach them what they’ll be up against as far as the pitfalls of the job and how to best adapt to any given situation. It’s about being honest about what the products are going to do in the real world, not just about selling the product.”

Aside from laying out the truth on what to expect in the field, Roman says he’s always told contractors that with



any customer, creating a written, detailed scope of work and practicing upfront client communication is key. "You have to sit down with the client and explain what you're doing in each phase of the project and why," he says. "I get everything out on the table straightaway before we start the project so there are no misunderstandings."

He says availability is another contractor must, especially in a tough economy. "If you're trying to survive, answer your phone," he says. "Otherwise, you will easily lose jobs to the competition. Never avoid or put off the client if you have unfinished work, and if they have a problem, face it head on. You'll find that most people are

easily appeased when you're responsive to their needs. I hear so many stories from my customers of bad experiences with unreliable contractors who basically use a 'hit and run' mentality, and after being paid, leave them high and dry with their issues."

In 2007, Roman left Brickform. After working briefly for NewLook International Inc. and Concrete Coatings Inc., he started Staintec, which specializes in on-site decorative concrete project consultation and installation supervision as well as hands-on product training for contractors. In addition, it offers decorative concrete services such as staining, sealing, stamping, epoxy systems and textured overlays.

Staintec also does concrete restoration jobs.

Amid countless installations over the years, some of Roman's standout projects include large sandblasted logos at a Dodge dealership in Las Vegas, sandblasted "Persian rug" designs at the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood, Calif., and a 30,000-square-foot acid-stained floor at the College of San Mateo in San Mateo, Calif.

Due to a troubled economy, his days of providing field support and giving demos as an instructor on the road have slowed dramatically. "I think because sales are down so much, in most cases manufacturers and distributors can't justify the resources to host decent training events," he says.



Roman does not consider himself an artist, but instead someone with “a common-sense skill set.” When he begins the design process at a new job site, he asks himself how certain colors and designs will fit in with the environment, how specific products will perform on the site and whether his chosen application will meet the client’s budget.

“The unique thing about decorative concrete is that each job is its own piece of art,” he says. “I’m not an artist, but I do have a great deal of insight into how the products work and what their limitations are.”

When asked which products or applications he thinks carry the most weight in the decorative concrete industry today, he

listed one method that he hasn’t practiced much himself: polishing. The longevity of a polished surface’s quality makes concrete polishing the No. 1 application method out there and a great choice for commercial environments and sustainable building, he says. Roman mentions mold-casted concrete and innovative countertop installation methods as other notable industry trends.

What’s next for Roman? He plans to work for decorative-concrete materials company Kingdom Products, alongside close friend Bart Sacco, Kingdom founder and president of Throop, Pa.-based Concrete Texturing Tool & Supply, and Jeannie Quach, who spent many years at

Brickform as a customer service manager.

Regardless of what his future holds, Roman has no intention of leaving hands-on work in the field just yet. “I really enjoy the kind of work I do,” he says. “Every job has its own set of lessons to learn.”

www.staintec.com

Glen Roman will present “Managing and Directing Clients’ Expectations” Wednesday, Feb. 22, at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show. For more, go to ConcreteDecorShow.com.





STEP UP

PLANNING, POURING AND FINISHING HALF-ROUND STEPS

Photos courtesy of Deco-Crete Supply

Half-round steps created by Jason Geiser and his crew at a home in Medina, Ohio.

by Jason Geiser

Decorative concrete has grown by leaps and bounds over the past 20 years as people have started to realize what kinds of natural looks can be achieved. As demand has risen, stamp manufacturers are continually refining their techniques to create more realistic impressions.

Yet for all the advancements that have been made when it comes to transforming the horizontal portion of a slab, the most common vertical element, the step, gets overlooked.

Time and time again I have seen stamped jobs that are beautifully detailed, with crisp impressions and perfectly contrasting colors, but are adjacent to steps that are just regular concrete. The steps have square ends and flat

risers. They may have some texture or they may not, depending on how quickly the forms were pulled, and at most, they have lines drawn down the faces. You can do better.

I've outlined a few tips and techniques developed over the years for forming and pouring half-round steps. While each person has their own unique way of doing things, I have found these things to be very helpful.

When you are finished pouring a set of half-round steps using these techniques, take a picture and hold it next to a set of regular steps on your next estimate. If people can see what they are going to get, they will pay more for these types of steps, I promise you.



1 PLANNING THE STEPS AS A SEPARATE JOB

For this article I am going to focus primarily on steps coming off the back of a house leading to a patio area. In our part of the country (Ohio) most doors in this application are typically sliding glass doors or French-type swing doors ranging from 6 to 7 feet wide. Pouring steps off these types of doors as half-round steps is one of the best ways to make them stand out. It eliminates the flat sides that are characteristic of “regular” concrete steps. Also, walkers can step up and down on all sides, eliminating handrails in most cases.

Because steps are one of the most visible parts of a job, it is important to give them the attention they deserve. This means pouring the steps separately from the rest of the job. If you only have one step it may be possible to pour everything together, but if you have more than one step I would pour the steps separately.

I have seen guys get into trouble so many times trying to do too much at once. As a result, some part of the job suffers. Whether it is a donated birdbath in front of the steps from standing on knee boards, dark spots from where the release was troweled in, or the riser sagging from pulling forms too soon — I could go on and on. There is enough to worry about on the horizontal stamped portion, so when planning your pours, make sure to give the steps adequate attention by pouring them separately.

This will not just enhance the overall look of the job. From a structural standpoint, steps poured separately can move independently from the slab on grade.



Steps are one of the most visible elements of a project. To make sure you give them your full attention, plan to pour them separately from the rest of your job.

2 SETTING YOUR FOUNDATION

When prepping to pour your steps, it is important that you have a solid foundation for them to sit on. This is especially important when you backfill the “overdig” gap (left over after the foundation is poured) with dirt. If your steps do not have something solid to anchor them, they will inevitably sink as the dirt underneath begins to settle.

To prevent this, fasten a 2-inch piece of angle iron to the outside wall of the house with concrete anchors. Then, dry-stack cement blocks on the angle iron up to the point where you will be able to place 6 inches of concrete like a cap across the whole step. The front portion of the step is usually on virgin dirt, out far enough from the backfilled area to be OK.



Attach a piece of angle iron to anchor your steps and keep them from sinking.



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3 FORMING

Regardless of the material you use to form half-round steps, the most important thing is that the ends of your forms don't move. To ensure that they don't move, use Tapcons to fasten blocks of wood to the house at the level the risers will be at. Then, fasten the ends of the forms to the blocks. Any type of product that will bend to a tight radius, i.e. 1/4-inch fiberboard, polylumber or Aztec forms, will work for forming.

Next, drive stakes into the ground that will hold your forms at the proper height. It is also important to account for the thickness of the liners when setting your forms.

Another material that works well for half-round steps is steel forms. Most of the doors that would be at the back of a house are similar in width, and steel forms allow you to repeatedly pour a standard-size step. To make steel forms, contact your local metal fabricator and have them roll a 6-inch by 1/8-inch piece of metal in the arch and the width you want. It is also important to have them weld a piece of 1-inch tubing on the outside of the form to hold it true. Make the form for the next step down larger by whatever width you want the tread to be, making sure to mirror the radius of the first step. If you have the space, I like to make the treads between 16



To make sure your forms don't move, fasten blocks of wood to the house at the level the risers will be at. Then, fasten the ends of the forms to the blocks.

and 18 inches. Oversized treads not only double as a seat or an area for potted plants, but are also a major selling point. You can have your steel forms made in sections to make them easier to transport.

4 FORM LINERS

I talk to a lot of contractors who are scared of using form liners, but once I convince them, they rarely use anything else. Once you get the hang of using form liners you will find that using them is easier than having to pull the form, rub the face and try to stamp a little bit of texture. If the steps are vibrated properly then the finishing process is very simple.

The two main types of form liners are rubber and Styrofoam. Rubber liners can be attached to the form using screws. Styrofoam liners can be attached with spray adhesive or screws.

Using Styrofoam liners on a radius step can be difficult because Styrofoam is not very flexible. To help with this, apply bending tape provided by the manufacturer and line the back of the form to ensure that it will bend but not break. After applying the tape, use screws with fender washers and run them through the front of the liner into your forming material to pull the liner closer to the form.

Rubber form liners are typically 1 to 2 inches thick and vary in riser height and length. The most common type of rubber liners have a rock-face edge and give the steps a natural broken-stone look. Rubber liners are fastened to the form using screws and are reusable.

I like to lube the inside of the forms, which makes them easier



Form liners are typically made from either Styrofoam or rubber. When using form liners, you don't have to manually stamp texture onto your steps.

to pull off and clean. Any type of form release will work on rubber forms.

However, not every release will work with Styrofoam forms — for example, petroleum will eat away the Styrofoam. Vegetable oil or some type of water-based lube works better.

Using Melted Styrofoam to Create a Stony Surface

The first time I ever used Styrofoam forms, I brushed on a petroleum-based release. Keep in mind, the cement truck was already on the job and we were ready to pour.

I finished putting the release on and looked back at the 50 feet of liner I had just brushed only to see

that the Styrofoam was completely eaten away. Not a real profitable start to my career.

Luckily it was at my house, so the only person upset was my wife. I ended up pouring it anyway, and it turned out pretty cool. The melted Styrofoam was very irregular and gave the concrete a rock look.

Since that experience, I have had jobs where I have purposefully used this method to create a unique look with no repeat in the pattern. To do this, attach 2-inch foam (called "blue board") to a form and brush diesel fuel or xylene onto it.

5 PLACING THE CONCRETE

The key to pouring radius steps is to fill them evenly so the concrete pushes against every part of the form at the same rate of pressure. (This is not an issue if you use steel forms, which can stand up to the pressure placed on them by an uneven pour.)

Do not pour the concrete into the steps using the concrete chute! A good old-fashioned shovel works best. If the forms are filled evenly, the stakes you put in are just to hold your forms to height and nothing else. The concrete will naturally push to where it needs to be as long as your forms are well-fastened to the house.

Another important part of placing the concrete in the steps is vibrating. I have found cordless pencil vibrators work best. If you do not have a pencil vibrator, an old palm sander held against the outside of the form will also work. Vibrating allows the concrete to fill in all of the voids near the liner, making detailing less laborious.

When working with form liners that are 1 to 2 inches thick, there will be an area underneath the riser that cannot get colored or floated before you pull the step form. To deal with this, measure down 3/4 inch from the bottom of the first step to start your next tread. I know what you are thinking: "The step will have too much slope." But let me explain. Most floats are 1/4 inch thick. Add that to the 1/4 inch you will need to move your float underneath the liner, plus 1/4 inch for slope. Works out great.

When the steps are formed and finished this way, the spot underneath the liner is ready to go. This also makes pulling the forms without damaging the step face a lot easier. To gauge how far your float needs to go in under the liner, take a piece of tape or use marking paint and mark your float with the proper distance.



To prepare your float to go under a liner's overhang while finishing, measure the depth of the overhang and mark it on your tool.

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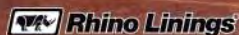
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6 COLOR HARDENER AND FINISHING

I am a huge fan of color hardener in general, but perhaps some of its biggest advantages come into play with steps. I know some of you might be saying, "Yeah, color hardener works great on flat surfaces like the step treads, but what about the face? Won't it still be gray?" The beauty of color hardener is that it allows you to come back after everything else on the job is done and focus on detailing.

Here is how this works. Find the finest sifter or strainer you can get your hands on, even if it requires stealing a strainer from the kitchen. I have found bucket strainers from local paint stores that fit over a bucket to work best. Next, pour the color hardener over the strainer and shake to get rid of the larger aggregate, leaving the fines in the bucket below. For rock-face steps, if you are going to detail the faces the same day, mix the fines with water and brush the slurry onto the face of the steps. If you are detailing the next day, next week or whenever, mix with one part water and one part bonding.

When detailing a step face on which a Styrofoam liner was used, the procedure is basically the same. If doing a bull nose, cut



A clever use of color hardener to create a two-color rainbow effect on half rounds.

off 4 to 5 inches of your liner and wrap the profile in packaging tape to create a tool. Then take your slurry and butter it onto the face of the step using the tool. At this point you can either leave the profile smooth or stamp it to create a texture.

Another thing you can do with color

hardener on bull-nose steps is make the nose and the riser different colors for a really awesome look.

Finally, if you're detailing with integral color, you have to do most of it while you can still work with the concrete. If the forms are pulled late or it's a hot day, detailing steps can be a tough feat. To help with this, drill 50 to 60 quarter-inch holes in a 5-gallon bucket and dump in a few scoops of fresh concrete. Then, using a pencil vibrator, vibrate the concrete over the top of a sheet of plastic, leaving a cement paste. You can then brush this paste onto the faces of the steps.

If you are not currently using any of these techniques, I encourage you to give them a try. Instead of viewing them as more work or a pain in the butt, think of them as an opportunity to not only make more money, but also to separate yourself from the competition. 🛠️

Jason Geiser owns Deco-Crete Supply and Cornerstone Concrete Designs, both based in Orrville, Ohio. He can be contacted at jason@deco-cretesupply.com.



Troweling color hardener. When creating steps for homeowners, red is a nice alternative to gray.

Jason Geiser will offer several courses and participate in a panel at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show. For more information, go to ConcreteDecorShow.com.



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green MATTERS

A Place to Learn about Evolving Green Ideas and Practices

Over the last several months, I have been helping to plan the Green Matters Conference, which will be a part of the Concrete Decor Show in San Antonio, Texas, next February.



by Sherry A. Boyd

I've talked to experts on everything from LEED terminology and concrete polishing to sustainable coatings and organic materials. In this process, I've noticed that just when you think you know what green means, something changes.

Going green is a process better thought of as "greening" our business in every aspect. No other topic presents more

challenges for us, and it's getting more complicated every day. We live in an exciting time, when revising our fundamental definition of the best practices is a necessity. We are all seeking materials that are safer for the environment, but also for the contractors who use them. Methods we use in every step on the job must contribute to going green but also reduce costs and use of resources during construction. Meanwhile, contractors encounter changing codes and standards, each of which have limitations and can increase the burden of documentation required, but there aren't more hours in a day.

Much is written about the USGBC's LEED certification program. Undoubtedly, it has become a dominant force influencing product selection. That's just a little odd,

because LEED certifies projects, not products. It was set up to influence the design and construction process and result in buildings that are healthier for occupants and better for the environment. In practice, the point system often will recognize products for being less harmful than in the past, but it doesn't always highly rate products that have zero VOCs or are wholly organic and earth-friendly unless the industry has set up its own certification standards for them. There are great gaps.

Still, let's not discount LEED. The way it awards points has increased demand for many types of specialty concrete, including pervious concrete and polished concrete. So it's important for anyone in architectural and decorative concrete to understand and be able to use the terminology if they want



green
MATTERS
CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2012

OPENING ADDRESS

Green Building Market Trends and Concrete Contributions

David D. Shepherd, AIA, LEED AP, Director – Sustainable Development, Portland Cement Association

The opening address for the Green Matters Conference will present the current outlook for the concrete and decorative concrete industry, covering the most important emerging issues and trends to watch. The program will include an update about ongoing concrete sustainability research at MIT.

David Shepherd is the director of sustainable development for the Portland Cement Association (PCA). In this role, he is an active member of the Steering Committee for the industry's Concrete Joint Sustainability Initiative.

Panel Discussion Sessions

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2012

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PANEL

Sustainable Design Using Architectural and Decorative Concrete

Moderated by Timothy J. Gregorski, Senior Editor, Building Design + Construction

Panelists: Hiram Ball Jr., President and CEO, Ball Consulting Ltd.; Kirby Davis, CSI, CCTS, CDT, LEED AP BD+C, National Specification Manager, Laticrete International; Vance Pool, Senior Director, National Resources, National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA); and Fred Ricketts, President, Boldstone.

CONCRETE TECHNOLOGY PANEL

Environmentally Friendly Concrete Mix Design: Balancing Sustainability, Performance & Economy

Moderated by Jan R. Prusinski, P.E., LEED AP, Executive Director, Cement Council of Texas
Panelists: Dr. Ward Malisch, Ph.D, Technical Director, American Society of Concrete Contractors (ASCC); Larry Rowland, CSI - CCPR, LEED AP, Manager of Technical Services, Lehigh White

Cement Co.; David D. Shepherd, AIA, LEED AP, Director, Sustainable Development, Portland Cement Association (PCA); and Sean M. Van Delist, LEED AP, Technical Services Director, Tex-Mix Concrete

DECORATIVE CONCRETE MATERIALS PANEL

The Greening of Decorative Concrete: LEED & Beyond

Moderated by John Strieder, Editor, *Concrete Decor*

Panelists: Pat Soler, CEO, Concrete Earth; Chris Sullivan, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, ChemSystem Inc; Jaime Villagomez, President, NewLook International; and Jim Orella, Regional Manager-South Central, L. M. Scofield Co.

CONCRETE POLISHING PANEL

Reflecting on Polished Concrete: Contributing to a Greener Environment

Moderated by Peter Wagner, Deco-Pour

Panelists: Joe Reardon, Concrete Products Specialist, Prosoco; Shawn Wardall, Owner, Specialized Construction Services Inc.; and Amanda Tullios, AIA, LEED AP, BD+C, ID+C, GreeNexus Consulting

to talk to architects and specifiers. At the Green Matters Conference, Chris Sullivan will present a seminar on “The Vocabulary of LEED” to provide a quick way to learn to use these terms correctly. He thinks his seminar is just the starting point. Chris tells me this: “Replacing traditional building materials with new green materials and systems often requires new processes, equipment, and at the very least, education for installers. This all takes time and money. It’s well-spent time and money and an investment in the future, but it needs to be factored in on the front end.”

The Green Matters Conference is held side by side with the Concrete Decor Show for exactly this reason: As innovative products and new methods come to market, it is a challenge for contractors to evaluate when, where and how to use them. Timing, tools and procedures may change. Suitability for the climate and local needs have to be considered. Talking to someone who has experience can save time, costs and headaches. Reading about it is one thing, watching a project start to finish or even getting hands-on in the field is another. Educators call hands-on workshops “experiential learning” but I call them “making mistakes before getting on the job where they cost money to fix.”

I look forward to stepping away from the computer and going to see for myself in the Demo Pavilion at the Concrete Decor Show.

Green building changes everything from job-site practices to basic concrete ordering. For example, there is quite a debate about green mix designs. These seem good on paper until you consider how reduced cement content results in challenges on the job site, such as increased set times, longer curing times and altered color. More importantly, is a green mix design going to produce the same long-term durability? This topic will be explored in more depth in a panel discussion called “Environmentally Friendly Concrete Mix Design: Balancing Sustainability, Performance & Economy.” Also, Ward Malisch will provide a seminar to help contractors know how to handle what he calls “sustainability-at-all-costs” requests.

The opening speaker at the Green Matters Conference — David Shepherd, director of sustainability for the Portland Cement Association — will provide an update on new research as well as provide an outlook on emerging trends and issues for architectural and decorative concrete. Here is a taste of his perspective: “Research resulting from life-cycle assessment has revealed that the majority of impacts are not from what the building materials are, but rather what the

building does,” he says. “This is where you see the design innovators working today. Cheapest first cost is not the answer to the issues we face — sustainable, versatile and durable is where value can be derived.”

From fundamental mix design challenges to innovations such as infrared reflective coatings, the Green Matters Conference will cover a broad range of topics. Seminars and panel discussions provide current information on innovative uses of concrete to provide cooling and storm-water management, advancements in functional resilience, environmental benefits of polished concrete, and an update on new scientific research translated for nonscientists.

The conference brings together experts to talk about current problems, pragmatic methods, new technologies and trends that will impact the future — every shade of green to help us learn more of the things we need to know now. 📱

Sherry A. Boyd is conference director for the Green Matters Conference at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show. A USGBC member, she gained knowledge of the decorative concrete market from eight years as head of marketing for a leading manufacturer of concrete coloring materials. Email her at sboyd@protrade.pub.com.

Seminars

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2012

Environmental Benefits of Polished Concrete with Integral Color, Dyes or Stains

Presented by Jim Orella, Regional Manager-South Central, L. M. Scofield Co.

Green Concrete Effects on Concrete Contractors

Presented by Dr. Ward Malisch, Ph.D, Technical Director, American Society of Concrete Contractors (ASCC)

The Science, Impact and Benefits of Infrared Reflective Coatings

Presented by Jaime Villagomez, President, NewLook International

Sustaining Green: What are the Global Trends?

Presented by Kirby Davis, CSI, CCTS, CDT, LEED AP, BD+C, National Specification Manager, Laticrete International

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2012

A Concrete Solution to Green Building

Presented by Larry Rowland, CSI - CCPR, LEED AP, Manager of Technical Services, Lehigh White Cement Co.

Concrete Environmental Solutions: Cooling & Stormwater Management Benefits

Presented by Vance Pool, Senior Director, National Resources, National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA)

Demystifying Sustainable Coating Technologies & Performance Expectations

Presented by John Bennett, President, Eco Safety Inc.

It's Not All LEED: The Quest for Earth-Friendly, Safe and Sustainable Materials

Presented by Pat Soler, CEO, Concrete Earth

Polished Concrete – Today's Green Alternative to Existing Floor Coverings

Presented by Brian Wilson, President & CEO, WerkMaster

The Vocabulary of LEED: Understand the Basics of Green Building, Sustainability, and LEED Criteria

Presented by Chris Sullivan, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, ChemSystems Inc.

Integrating Resilience into Sustainability

Presented by Stephen Szoke, Director of Codes and Standards, Portland Cement Association

Register for the 2012 Green Matters Conference at www.GreenConcreteMatters.com.

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CARLTON'S CORNER

Provide Free Extras Instead of Dropping Your Prices

As more competition fights for fewer pieces of the pie, it will become increasingly tempting to lower your prices in order to stay competitive. I understand this completely, because I operate a decorative concrete company in one of the most competitive and hard-hit housing economies in our nation. In times like these it's always tempting to lower prices, but I'm hoping after reading this article you might try another approach. Regardless of trade or business, lowering prices to compete is a race to the bottom that many companies don't survive.



by Doug Carlton

I'm not dogging your competition, but if they are like most, they are not good businessmen. I'm not saying they aren't good at the art of decorative concrete — I'm saying they aren't good at the art of business. Most don't seem to recognize the fact that each discounted dollar comes off the profit side of bookkeeping. If you are going head-to-head with someone who acts like they're unfamiliar with basic business accounting principles you are racing with the financially blind in hopes of victory. This race is dangerous, because many times your competition will go far beyond the threshold of profitability, losing money to get the job. How can you compete with that? Why would you want to?

It wasn't long ago folks valued quality over inexpensiveness, realizing something well-made could last many times longer than a cheaper version. But now, our nation has become accustomed to cheapness. At first, you might think this could complicate our goal of finding you more work, but after further consideration, not so. The mindset of those still buying our services is

changing. Yes, they still want the best price available but they also want the most for their money. Let me give you an example.

Let's say you are bidding head-to-head with one of your competitors who always seems to lose money but stay in business. Your bid is as low as you know it can go and still cover job cost with a little left for the company. Your follow-up call confirms that your competition is up to the same old tricks and has beaten your best price. The competitive side of you wants to match or beat their price, but this is risky at best.

the profit of your next job.

The reason more don't add incentives to compete is because the natural thing to do is lower the price. But again, this bottom-line discounting can be a dangerous game, especially when played with contractors who have less business savvy.

To work, ideas like this one require a solid reputation for quality work and reasonable prices. Our contracting business went through a phase back in the housing boom where customers were led to believe our services were too expensive. This

Offering creative benefits to your customers is necessary.

I like to take another approach in a competitive market like the one we work in today. You can do more for your customer by adding discounted or free incentives, all costing you much less than reducing your bid would. We already discussed how discounting off the bottom line is a 100 percent loss of profit. But adding a feature to a concrete counter or a reseal to an outdoor project is just as valuable to your customer and will cost you much less than discounting off the bid.

Providing extra work as an incentive only costs you part of what a discount would. If you charge \$800 for a concrete counter but give it away as an incentive you are not losing \$800. I doubt the loss is any more than half that. If you give away an outdoor reseal that retails for 80 cents per square foot, it doesn't cost you 80 cents but closer to 40 cents per square foot.

The idea here is to decrease the amount you're discounting and make your bottom line stronger. If you do the incentive work personally, the only thing you're out is time and some materials. Creative ways to land more work are possible without discounting

really took some work to fix, as the market corrected and fewer folks were making decorative concrete improvements. It wasn't a big deal when our firm was the only one bidding a negotiated project, but boy have things changed. One way we changed perception was to add incentives at no cost to our customers. This certainly helped, but it did take some time.

Your business can continue to prosper, but make no mistake, creative benefits for your customers are necessary — that is, creative benefits that don't rob your profit. 🚚

Doug Carlton operates Carlton Concrete Inc. in Visalia, Calif. He can be reached at carltondoug@comcast.net.

PRODUCT NEWS

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New Doosan DA40 offers improved performance

Doosan Infracore Construction Equipment has introduced the new DA40 articulated dump truck. Powered by a 6-cylinder interim Tier 4-compliant diesel engine with a gross power output of 500 horsepower at 2,100 rpm, the new DA40 offers a 22 percent increase in gross torque, to 1,750 foot-pounds at 1,300 rpm. It has an increased body capacity of 31.9 cubic yards,

and the payload has been boosted to 40 metric tons without the tailgate, an increase of more than 15 percent over the payload of Doosan's MT41.

The agile undercarriage, designed to ensure that all six wheels are in permanent contact with the ground, means that Doosan articulated dump trucks can operate on very rough and soft terrain on construction sites.

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PROJECT PROFILE

Highway 80 Median Jackson, Miss.

by David Searls

The U.S. Highway 80 Corridor in southwest Jackson, Miss., is one of those aging main drags that could use some aesthetic improvements. To the relief of many locals, much-needed changes are being made.

One such upgrade involves decorative concrete contractor SurfaceTechs Seamless Solutions of suburban Jackson. In the summer of 2010, SurfaceTechs topped a 70,000-square-foot stretch of the highway's median with a putty- and brick-colored overlay. The topping adds eye appeal and a sense of unanticipated graciousness to the center of the eight-mile stretch of corridor, complementing and accenting the area's other ongoing improvements. "It really dresses up that median. We've gotten very positive comments about it," says Nina Holbrook, executive director of the Metrocenter Area Coalition, a driving force behind the revitalization of this rundown stretch of thoroughfare.

Holbrook had seen similar redesigns on medians elsewhere and thought such an approach would fit her group's ambitious plans for this corridor.

Drivers road-hypnotized by the typical American highway don't expect to see much more than endless expanses of



Photos by Andy Wiley, SurfaceTechs Seamless Solutions

bland concrete pavement. The windshield view was no different along this gritty commercial route — until that median got dressed up.

The project is part of an ongoing three-year beautification push that includes landscaping, sidewalks and other improvements. The finished roadway will offer an attractive complement to downtown Jackson and the campus of Jackson State University.

Making an "S"

Bill McDade of local landscape architectural firm Weatherford/McDade Ltd. designed the median's attention-grabbing "S" pattern, used in addition to a more angular straight-edged design. It was up to Bradley Fulton, director of operations for SurfaceTechs, to make the "S" design reality. No small challenge, the project encompassed some 8 miles of surface, with widths ranging from 2 feet to 20 feet.

The "S" art was computer-generated, "but we had to physically lay it out," says Fulton. That was a low-tech and tedious

process completed in increments of 60 to 80 linear feet at a time.

"We took and formed 8- and 10-foot lengths of 1-inch PVC pipe to replicate the pattern drawn by computer," Fulton recalls. "We taped the PVC down, traced the pattern, pulled up the PVC and masked off the surface for spraying."

The decorative application (most of it

Project at a Glance

Client: City of Jackson, Miss.

Decorative Concrete Contractor: SurfaceTechs Seamless Solutions, Ridgeland, Miss.

General Contractor: Rotolo Consultants Inc., Slidell, La.

Project Manager: Bradley Fulton

Landscape Architect: Weatherford/McDade Ltd., Jackson, Miss.

Project specs: Resurface 70,000 square feet of median along an eight-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 80 in Jackson, Miss.

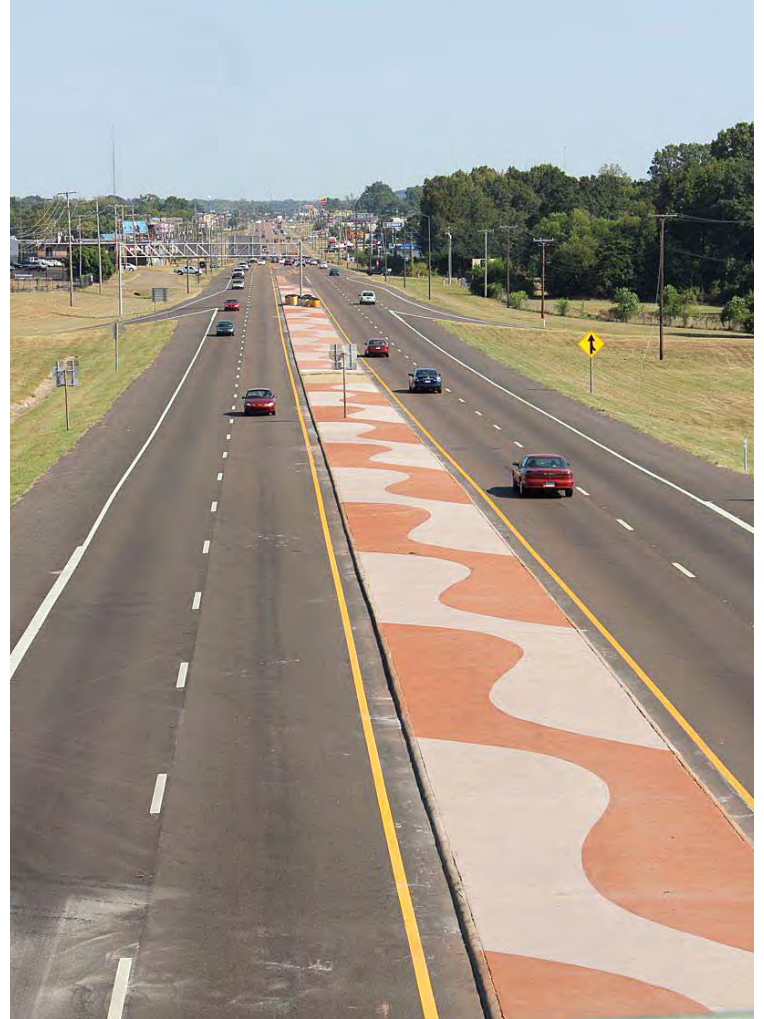
Timeline: Three months

Products used: Materials from Elite Crete Systems (Thin-Finish concrete overlay, Portion Control Colorant in Brick and Sangria, CSS Emulsion Concrete Sealer)



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Matte-Magic from Brickform, a division of Solomon Colors Inc.

We all know that sealing your work is important to extending the longevity of the project, but what if your client doesn't like the glossy, wet look that is typical with sealers? Brickform, a division of Solomon Colors Inc., has come up with a solution.

Matte-Magic is a liquid additive that reduces the level of gloss in acrylic solvent-based sealers. Up to four 8-ounce units of Matte-Magic can be added for every 5 gallons of sealer to produce a sheen that can range from semigloss to satin,

depending on how much you add.

"Some people don't like the high-gloss look. Matte-Magic can get a look that is more natural," says Art Pinto, product manager for Brickform. "It's formulated in such a way that you can control the degree of the matte finish."

Matte-Magic is a mix of resin and powdered matting agents. The millions of powder particles reflect light every which way, diffusing it and reducing gloss.

The ability to control sheen could mean that contractors no longer have to buy multiple sealers with varying gloss levels and distributors no longer have to



Photo courtesy of Brickform

stock them, Pinto says. Now, adding a small amount to your favorite solvent-based sealer can accomplish the same result.

Also, according to Brickform literature, the reduced reflectivity provided by Matte-Magic "helps distinguish floor color." Pinto says that adding Matte-Magic will not alter the color of the concrete, and no special mixing is required. The additive will not affect viscosity, either.

"Most matting agents are powders, but Matte-Magic is already mixed in resin. Just put it in and mix it with a stick," he says. "It's ready to go."

 www.brickform.com

over previously existing concrete) consisted of two squeegee coats of Elite Crete Systems Thin-Finish, an overlay integrally colored with Brick and Sangria Portion Control from Elite Crete. Then the integrally colored Thin-Finish was sprayed through a hopper gun over both patterns. The project was finally sealed with two coats of Elite Crete CSS Emulsion clear-coat concrete sealer.

A slow pace in hot weather

The work was pretty slow-going. Fulton's crew of about 15 could only work between morning and evening rush hours and



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"We've gotten **very positive** comments about it."

— Nina Holbrook, Metrocenter Area Coalition,
about the improved highway median

on weekends.

"The guys would sometimes be working 3 feet from car fenders," says Fulton.

At other times, lanes had to be closed down and traffic rerouted.

And then there was the seasonal challenge. The SurfaceTechs crew worked between the months of June and September of last year. Summer in the Deep South is unquestionably a less-than-ideal time of



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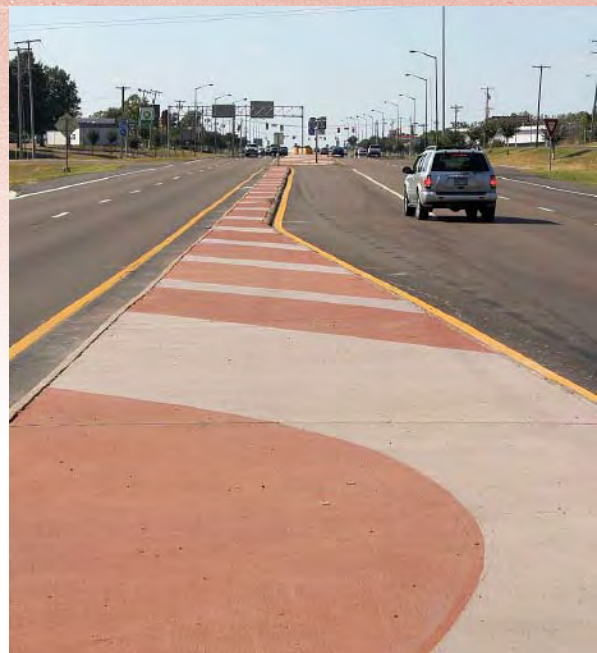
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year for a project of this nature.

"Yeah, it was pretty hot out there," Fulton says with a chuckle. "It was 100 degrees or hotter most every day. And then there were long stretches where it rained daily. We'd have to cover up our work, pack up and get out of there."

His crew was provided with plenty of water, Gatorade and cold towels, but, Fulton says, "We did have a few guys who just said, 'This isn't for me.'"

The craftspeople who stuck with it achieved something that is much appreciated by their customers. "It helps improve the whole area," says Holbrook. 🚧

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PRODUCT NEWS

Resurfacer from Engrave-A-Crete

Engrave-A-Crete Inc. has added Mantello Resurfacer to its line of decorative concrete products. Available in white or gray, Mantello Resurfacer is an environmentally progressive product that bonds tightly to stable concrete to produce a flawless, extremely durable surface suitable for staining or engraving in a variety of patterns. Antimicrobial additives inhibit the growth of bacteria and fungi for a healthier environment.

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Give plain concrete a makeover with GraniteFX

New from Seal-Krete, GraniteFX Decorative Concrete Coating provides a natural, stone-like finish to a multitude of concrete surfaces, including walkways, patios, porches and pool decks.

GraniteFX Decorative Concrete Coating comes in a water-based, ready-to-use brush-and-roll formula that's easy to apply and easy to clean up. First, apply the textured base coat and allow the surface to dry for two to six hours. Then apply the clear sealer and crushed stone. Multiple coats will increase the density of the stone appearance. Cleanup requires only soap and water.


GraniteFX is not recommended for use on driveways or garage floors, but it's ideally suited for walkways, steps, and pool surrounds. It comes in four natural-looking colors: Gulf Shore is a light stone color similar to that of a sandy beach, Keystone is a darker gray, Monterrey is a light beige with a hint of coral, and Sedona is a darker terra cotta.

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TX1000 now being sold at White Cap

Ultra Concrete Coatings' UltraCrete-TX1000 texturing overlay is now available at HD Supply White Cap construction supply stores.

UltraCrete-TX1000 all-in-one texturing overlay is a single-bag dry mix requiring only the addition of water to produce a permanent bonding cement overlay for interior and exterior installations. Due to its high-polymer makeup, UltraCrete-TX1000 is suitable for applications ranging from surfaces with vehicular traffic to residential flooring and countertops. 

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How Should You Reinforce Your Countertop?

Proper reinforcing and good mix design go hand in hand to prevent problems with concrete countertops. The materials you use for reinforcing are just as important as those you select for your mix. To understand which materials are best for reinforcing your concrete countertop, you first need to understand how reinforcing works.



by Jeffrey Girard, P.E.

Concrete countertops are essentially beams that span an open space. When a force is applied to the top of the countertop, it causes compression on the top surface and

tension on the bottom surface.

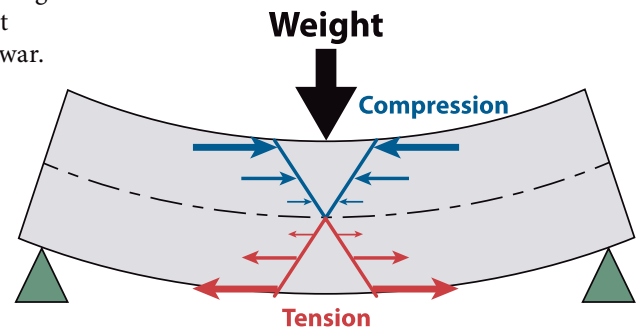
Concrete has much more compressive strength (e.g. 3,000 psi) than tensile strength (e.g. 400 psi). Therefore, it needs help where the tensile forces occur — at the bottom of the slab/beam.

Those tensile forces occur in a straight line along the length of the slab, just like a rope being pulled in a tug-of-war. Therefore, reinforcing should be placed in straight lines along the long axis of the slab. You do need cross strands because there is some force along the short axis of the slab, but the long axis is the primary concern.

Now that you understand tensile forces and the tug-of-war principle, you know where to put

the reinforcing. But what materials should you use and why?

Since concrete is weak in tension, you need high-tensile-strength materials that meet structural standards and have known characteristics. The materials should be the



Concrete has more compressive strength than tensile strength, so to support weight, a countertop needs reinforcement at the bottom.

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The left picture shows less-than-ideal reinforcement. When placing reinforcing wire, your primary focus should be along the long axis of the slab. Red lines drawn onto the picture (right) illustrate a better arrangement.

Photos and images courtesy of The Concrete Countertop Institute

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right size to fit in thin slabs.

Let's review the materials commonly used (or misused) for reinforcement and see how they stack up.

Chicken wire, stucco mesh, etc.

Materials such as chicken wire, stucco mesh, wire screening, expanded metal, fence wire or fiberglass cloth should never be used as primary reinforcement because their properties are too variable or they are not sufficiently strong. You cannot rely on these materials.

Rebar

Reinforcing material can be thought of as being like a spring that stretches more when more load is applied to it. The weight of the concrete slab is what drives the bending, and the more strands of steel reinforcing used, the lower the load each individual strand of steel feels.

You should use lots of small strands of reinforcing, rather than one big strand, to limit the amount of stretching and, therefore, hairline cracks. If you use rebar, you can't fit enough strands into the countertop slab.

Furthermore, even No. 3 rebar (3/8-inch diameter) is too big to fit into a 1.5-inch thick countertop slab without causing telegraph cracking. There is simply not enough concrete above the rebar. The same applies for any large steel reinforcement such as cattle grate. These materials are very strong — they are just too big.

A good rule of thumb is to use reinforcing less than 3/16 inch in diameter for concrete that will be less than 3 inches thick.

Fibers

Fibers are used in concrete for shrinkage cracking control. Polypropylene and

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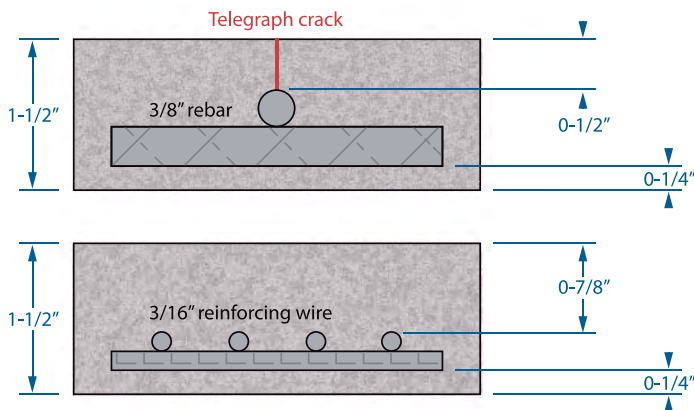
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Countertops that use 3/8-inch rebar for strength can develop telegraph cracks on top of the bars. Reinforcing wire won't cause this problem.

nylon are typical fiber materials. These materials are not structural — they do not have the strength to withstand tensile forces.

There are some fibers that have structural strength, such as hooked steel, chopped carbon, polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) and chopped alkali-resistant (AR) glass. These fibers help control crack size by distributing the tensile stresses throughout the

beam. Instead of one large crack, a beam with adequate fiber reinforcement will instead have many smaller cracks that are difficult to see. If a client can't see a crack, it is effectively nonexistent.

However, fibers do not provide primary structural reinforcement and cannot replace steel. They provide secondary shrinkage control and crack control.

What about GFRC?

Like other mixes reinforced with fibers, glass-fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC) cannot substitute for reinforced concrete when true load-carrying capacity is required. It's best used for complex, three-dimensional shells where loads are light.

GFRC derives its tensile strength from

large amounts of alkali-resistant glass fibers that provide sufficient material cross-sectional area to resist the anticipated tensile loads. Often a loading of 5 percent fiber by weight of total material is used. So for every 95 pounds of material in the GFRC mix, 5 pounds of glass fiber is added. The polymer and concrete matrix serves to bind the fibers together and transfer loads from one fiber to another via shear stresses through the matrix.

The orientation of the fibers is important. The more random the orientation, the more fibers are needed to resist the load. That's because on average, only a small fraction of randomly oriented fibers are oriented in the right direction. A common mistake for concrete countertop makers is to neglect rolling the fibers. This leaves the fibers in a random arrangement that is much weaker than rolled fibers.

Masonry-block ladder wire

Ladder wire is used for constructing masonry block walls. The wire is laid in the mortar joint between horizontal courses of block.

Ladder wire is usually 9-gauge structural wire that conforms to ASTM A82. This wire has a tensile strength of 80,000 psi. Rebar has a tensile strength of only 60,000 psi.

Ladder wire is less than 3/16 inch in diameter, making it a perfect size for

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by Kelly O'Brien

River Stones Run Through It

Buckets of Stone, Sacramento, Calif.
www.bucketsofstone.com

Originally designed for a shower bench installation, this striking river-themed countertop application features a dazzling blue-colored mix with glass aggregate and gorgeous river stone detailing.

Ingredients:

Your preferred white-cement-based countertop mix using the following aggregate and sand ratios (amounts given are per cubic foot of concrete):

17.6 pounds American Specialty Glass clear glass aggregate: size No. 2

28 pounds American Specialty Glass clear glass aggregate: size No. 1

22.8 pounds American Specialty Glass clear glass aggregate: size No. 0

21.8 pounds 20/50-mesh glass sand

13.5 pounds Blue Concrete 80-mesh glass sand (or generic 90-mesh silica sand)

The pigment loading for this mix:

41.3 grams Blue Concrete SB144-EXF Yellow Oxide pigment

46.2 grams Blue Concrete SB44-EXF Super Blue pigment

Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 Shellac: Clear

Round river stones (of the sort used in landscaping — or found at the bottom of rivers)

Ball Consulting Ltd. Pol-Ease 2650 release agent

Blue Concrete ICT Counter-Hard and Counter-Guard First Sealz sealer system

Special tools required: 3/4-inch melamine for building your form, hot glue gun with glue, router with a flat-bottom bit, hand-held wet grinder with disks from 30 grit to 400 grit

Directions:

► Your first step will be to lay out the shape of the piece you are casting on a sheet of melamine. You can trace around a template, or just draw the shape with a pencil if it's simple and you're not using a template.

► Now outline the area of the piece where you plan to place the stones.

► Fit the router with a flat-bottom bit and cut down into the melamine across the entire area where the stones are to be placed. The depth to cut down to depends on how rounded your river stones are. The rounder they are, the deeper you'll need to go. (If the stones are very flat or if they are precut, then you won't need to cut out the melamine.) For the project pictured, the stones went down about a quarter of an inch.

► You'll want to rout almost to the edge of the sheet of melamine, leaving just enough room to attach the vertical form pieces (which are also melamine). If you want to extend the stones down the edges of the piece, then mark the end point of the melamine channel on the side of the appropriate vertical form piece where it meets the base, and rout a channel of equivalent depth into that vertical form piece.

► Once you've got the void for the river stone area routed out in the base and sides of the form, you can assemble the entire form for your counter.

► Apply a coat of shellac to the raw melamine to waterproof it.

► Once the shellac has dried, you can start to place the stones.

Glue the stones to the melamine in whatever pattern or arrangement you like using the hot glue gun.

► Mix your white-cement-based concrete mix of choice with your aggregates and pigments.

► Apply release to the form around the stones, but be careful not to put any on the stones themselves.

► Pour the concrete into the form, and let it cure completely. Demold.

► Using a wet grinder equipped with a 30-grit lippage disk, grind the stones until they are almost flush with the surface of the counter. Then switch to the 50-grit and then the 100-grit disks, and keep grinding, being careful to keep the grinder perfectly parallel so as not to nick or gouge the surface outside the stones.

► Once you have ground the stones until they are as flush as possible with the rest of the counter, grind the entire surface to your liking, and smooth with the 100-grit disks.

► Slurry the surface to fill any pin holes or voids. (Need tips on this step? See the "Fixing Bug Holes in One Step" article in the April 2011 issue of *Concrete Decor*.)

► Polish the surface to 400 grit in preparation for sealing.

► Seal with the ICT countertop sealer system, and you're all set. 🛠️



Photos courtesy of Buckets of Stone



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reinforcing concrete countertops. That, combined with its strength, makes ladder wire an ideal reinforcing material.

Carbon fiber grid

Carbon fiber grid is a semiflexible mesh of flat carbon fiber ribbons woven into a 1-inch grid and bonded together with epoxy. The mesh is very flat, roughly 1/32-inch thick on average.

Each strand of the grid has a breaking strength of about 250 pounds. It's possible to replace a single strand of 9-gauge steel wire with no fewer than four strands of carbon fiber.

Carbon fiber grid is very useful for reinforcing thin sections, cantilever sections and curved sections. Take care when working with it, as the carbon fiber is brittle and any sharp kink or stress on the fiber will cut or weaken it.

PRODUCT NEWS

Metabo angle grinder features power

Metabo Corp. is now offering the W2000 7-inch angle grinder. This new large angle grinder delivers 2,000 watts of power.

The W2000 is equipped with a 7-inch wheel guard and features a powerful 15-amp motor, 89 inch-pounds of torque and a no-load speed of 8,500 rpm. A three-position side handle allows users to turn the tool 90 degrees to cut vertically while still having a firm grasp on the grinder.

Optional equipment for the W2000 includes a wide range of Metabo abrasives, adapter kits for wheels, and a dustless convertible shroud.


 www.metabo.us



How much reinforcement to use

Once you've decided on a type of reinforcement, how do you know how much to use? There is no simple answer to this question, as it depends on many factors, including the size, thickness and shape of the piece.

In general, more is better, unless there is so much reinforcing that there is not enough concrete around it to hold together. In general, spacing ladder wire strands longitudinally about 1 to 2 inches apart will in most situations give you adequate strength and peace of mind. Add cross strands at about one third the number of longitudinal strands, assuming the piece is long and rectangular. The more square the piece, the more longitudinal strands you need, because the forces are approximately the same in both directions.

The peace of mind you get from using the right reinforcing materials, and placing them in the right amounts in the right locations, is worth the extra effort. 

Jeffrey Girard is founder and president of The Concrete Countertop Institute and a pioneer of engineered concrete countertops. He can be reached at info@concretecountertopinstitute.com.

Jeffrey Girard will present "Step-by-Step Instructions for Creating Amazing GFRC Countertops" on Friday, Feb. 24, at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show. For more, go to ConcreteDecorShow.com.



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"I recommend you give it a try as well."

Bob Harris, Author
President, Decorative Concrete Institute



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PROJECT PROFILE

Concord Aviation Hangar Concord, N.C.

by Ted Uram

When Concord Aviation Property LLC wanted a polished aggregate surface for president Jack Roush's private hangar at the Concord Regional Airport in Concord, N.C., they ultimately called upon the services of Eric Wayne Inc., a full-service commercial and residential concrete contractor with offices located in Davidson, N.C.

Wayne has a large amount of experience in polished concrete, but prior to this project he had limited exposure to polished concrete surfaces where an integral color is used.

The project required Wayne, owner's representative Ian Prince, and Bob Hogan, the vice president and project manager for general contractor J.K. Hogan Inc. to fly all the way to Atlanta to visit the Decorative Concrete Institute and experience such surfaces first-hand. The client funded the trip.

"We were able to talk about polished, exposed-aggregate floors with integral color while actually walking on them," Wayne says. He says the DCI trip was instrumental in helping the team formulate



Photos courtesy of Eric Wayne Inc.

Project at a Glance

Client: Concord Aviation Property LLC, Concord, N.C.

Decorative Concrete Contractor: Eric Wayne, Eric Wayne Inc., Davidson, N.C.

General Contractor: J.K. Hogan Inc., Cornelius, N.C.

Project Manager: Bob Hogan

Owners' Representative: Ian Prince

Project Specs: Pour 12,000 square feet of concrete with integral color and bicolored aggregate, embedded radiant heat flooring, polish and finish

Timeline: Five weeks

Materials Supplier: Concrete Supply Co., Charlotte, N.C.

Materials Used: L. M. Scofield olive green integral color, Concrete Polishing Solutions Armor Surface Shield, Wacker ride-on power trowels

an overall approach.

Wayne knew this project would require his fullest attention. He understood all too well that colors can shift slightly in larger pours due to slight inconsistencies in each batch and a variety of other reasons.

The question of using liquid or powder colorant is also a concern. Adding large amounts of liquid color increases the liquid content of the mix, which can affect slump results, while adding powders increases the dry mass, making it more difficult to dial in the additional amount of water needed to maintain workability.

To further complicate matters, the specs called for radiant heat flooring, which would be fueled by solar panels and a backup propane-fired boiler. Beaver Brothers Inc., a HVAC contractor out of Salisbury, N.C., experienced in radiant heat flooring systems, was selected for the job.

The tubing for this element had to be placed prior to the pour and supported so that it would remain at the lower third of the slab. It had to be raised off of the embedded insulation while remaining deep enough from the surface to accommodate saw cuts for joints. (There also were aesthetic concerns with the solar panels — none of them could be seen from the air, which meant they could not be fixed to the roof.)

One bite at the apple

Steve Ragan, P.E. and vice president of technical services with Concrete Supply Co., of Charlotte, was chosen to dial in the concrete mix. There was very little margin for error. "We all knew we had one shot at this," Ragan says. "We had one bite at the apple."

After much trial and error, Ragan had



a recipe he felt would be just right. Granite aggregate from a local quarry was selected based on its unique pink veining. Ragan chose a 3/4-inch, No. 67 stone for the large aggregate and a 3/8-inch, No. 78 stone for the small aggregate. "You get this pink hue that is very attractive," Ragan says.

Sand not local to the area was selected based on its much lower water requirements. The combination helped greatly improve the overall shrinkage characteristics of the finished slab.

"The larger particles combined with the smaller particles resulted in less paste and more aggregate, which means less water," Ragan explains.

The overall distance from the ready-mix plant to the job site was about 20 minutes. Ragan operated a truck for that length of time to simulate the trip. He timed revolutions and checked the slump to make sure that he had everything absolutely right. An olive-green dry colorant from L. M. Scofield was added to the mix, and water was adjusted accordingly until the slump was perfected.

Ragan stressed the importance of not rinsing the concrete trucks with water when they returned to the plant. "Everything was

so finely tuned," he says. "The last thing we wanted to do was introduce more water to the mix, which could have resulted in subtle shifts in color across the slab."

Now that the mix was perfect, samples were needed to show the client.

"To avoid having to polish four or five different samples, we decided to pour concrete cylindrical samples and cut them in half to show the client how the color and aggregate would look together," Hogan adds.

Hogan tried more combinations and ultimately came up with a combination that used 50 percent less color, along with the right amount of larger aggregate combined with a little more of the smaller, to get the look that the owner wanted.

Pouring over radiant-heat tubing

For the pour itself, Wayne opted for a telescoping pouring mechanism called a telebelt. This type of unit allows trucks to pour directly into a hopper, which utilizes an articulating belt system to deliver concrete across broad areas without disturbing the floor.

"There were so many critical items involved in this pour," Hogan notes. "We

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had to secure the radiant heat tubing, make sure the wire mesh was in the proper location during the pour, maintain the quality and consistency of the mix and hope that the telebelt and finishers did their job.”

EWI dedicated several experienced finishers to monitoring the slab to be sure that the piping did not float up during the pour. The tubing was pressurized during the pour to ensure that it stayed intact throughout the operation. Beaver Brothers had a technician on-site in case the tubing needed repairs during the pour. A 52-meter pump was on-site as a backup should the telebelt fail. The pour went off without



a hitch.

Wayne’s crew stepped in to finish the concrete using Wacker ride-on trowels. Grinders were used to expose the aggregate and add a smooth finish. The crew started with 40-grit metal bonds to expose the aggregate. They then used 80 grit and 150 grit. The floor was then cleaned and densified with a liquid hardener before a switch to resin diamonds.

The polishing process involved several passes of resin diamond polishing heads, starting with 100 grit, then 200, 400, 800 and 1,500. The surface was burnished using 3,000-grit resin diamonds. In total, Wayne’s crew went over the surface of the floor 12

times. The entire process took four weeks.

“It was an excruciating schedule,” Wayne says. “But in the end, everyone was very, very pleased.”

The finished result was 12,000 square feet of concrete placed in one 280-yard pour. A special sand that required less water was used, and a small amount of retarder was added to each batch for workability. The floor is French-drained at the front and slopes 4 inches from rear to front.

As for the solar panels, 26 were custom-attached to the southern side of the hangar to fuel the radiant heat flooring, which is backed up by the propane heater in colder months. An olive-green integral dry colorant was added with bicolored pink-and-green aggregate to Types I and II concrete. The floor was sealed using Armor Surface Shield, from Concrete Polishing Solutions.

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PRODUCT NEWS

Ceratech releases highly engineered cements for industrial applications


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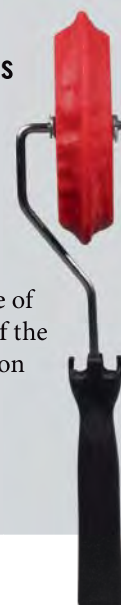
 www.ceratechinc.com

Butterfield offers urethane texture roller for control joints

Butterfield Color’s new control-joint texture roller is designed for chasing out 1-inch control joints. The rollers are made of urethane to provide superior release from concrete compared to similar rollers made of cast aluminum. The larger size of the roller minimizes pattern repetition and delivers a cleaner and more consistent joint texture.

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PROJECT PROFILE

Uline Distribution Center Coppell, Texas

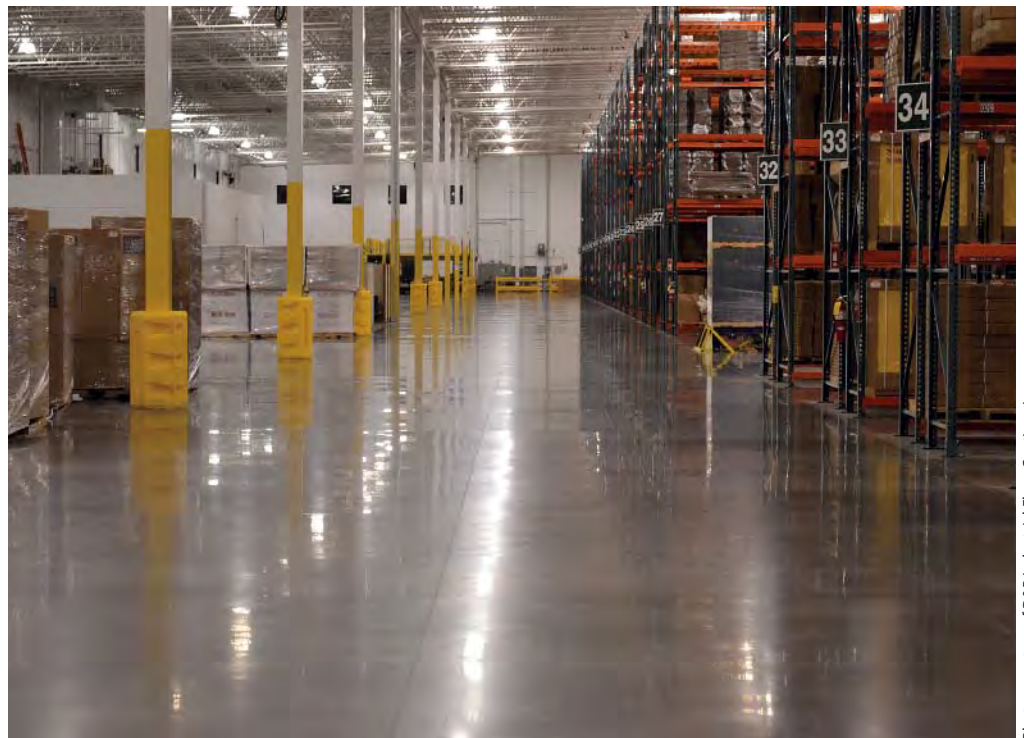
by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

D&B Industrial Floor Coatings Inc. is a company that knows a thing or two about retail and commercial floor systems, having polished and sealed floors for some of the largest retail companies in the United States. Three- or four-man crews have the process down almost to a science, capable of delivering projects in a four- to five-week time frame that exceed 500,000 square feet.

So when Uline — a leading North American distributor of shipping and packaging materials — was looking for a contractor to restore an existing warehouse near Dallas, Texas, D&B evaluated the 600,000-square-foot slab and offered a recommendation. D&B had already done restorative diamond polishing at three other Uline facilities, so it knew the drill. Their proposal this time involved extensive joint repair and filling, degreasing the existing slab and polishing the basic gray floor to restore its luster.

Satisfied with the pricing and a proposed time line of less than two months, Uline hired D&B to work its magic.

The building had previously been occupied by Shaw Flooring, a company best known for its carpeting. A number of holes needed to be patched before the polishing could even begin. “There were thousands upon thousands of holes in the floor that we were unaware of because they were covered



Photos courtesy of D&B Industrial Floor Coatings Inc.

up by Shaw’s racks,” says Brad Van Dam, president and owner of D&B Industrial Floor Coatings. “We knew there were holes but the number was ten- to twenty-fold what we estimated. It was ridiculous.”

Another challenging aspect the three-man crew often encountered was working without lights, says Stephen Nehls, who served as foreman of the job. (Nehls is a quality control manager as well as president of decorative concrete equipment company Floors by Design LLC.) The lights were being replaced and repositioned as construction commenced.

But even with these challenges, Nehls says, they could have easily finished in six weeks instead of the 11 weeks it took them. “We took so long because we had to wait for other people,” he says. They had to coordinate work schedules with tradespeople such as painters, demolition teams, drywallers and electricians. That

part was frustrating, he adds, because the crew had expected to be there about half the time. Instead, the job ran from February through May 2011.

Nehls says that to achieve the highly polished look on the distribution center’s floor, he first used Ashford Formula, a chemically reactive liquid hardener and densifier that’s been around for 60-plus years. Instead of coating the wearing surface, the product grows new crystals in the concrete, filling in concrete’s natural voids and creating a dense, hard surface that’s easy to clean. There’s no coating to wear off.

“Uline loves the Ashford look,” Nehls says. “And as long as they keep scrubbing the floors, they’ll stay shiny.”

“Uline has very high standards in cleanliness,” says Van Dam. “They are not only committed to clean floors in the beginning, but they maintain that

Project at a Glance

Client: Uline, a distributor of shipping and packaging materials

Contractor: D&B Industrial Floor Coatings Inc., Germantown, Wis.

Project Specs: Repair and polish 600,000 square feet of flooring in a warehouse near Dallas, Texas

Materials Used: Rapid Refloor from Metzger/McGuire, Euco QWIKjoint 200 polyuria floor joint filler from Euclid Chemical, Ashford Formula densifier from Curecrete Chemical Co., SAMz abrasives from Floors by Design LLC

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cleanliness throughout the life cycle of the building.”

In fact, adds Nehls, “If your shoes don’t squeak when you walk through one of their buildings, they won’t stand for it. We couldn’t ask for a better client.”

In addition to the Ashford Formula, Nehls continues, his SAMz abrasives, long-lasting diamonds that have only been on the market for a few months, allowed him to do the polishing in only four steps. “I originally made these diamonds for us to use because I was looking for a better diamond that would last forever,” he says, noting that he markets them through his company, Floors by Design LLC. “But they work so well, I decided to share them.”

Overall, Nehls says, he’s very pleased with the outcome of the Coppell, Texas, distribution center — with the exception of fresh holes that were more recently

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created by heavier-than-anticipated traffic. As it turns out, Uline's high-bay fork trucks and steel-wheeled pallet jacks are much harder on the surface than Shaw's soft-tired trucks were. Consequently, the vehicles are dislodging aggregate in the weaker paste areas, creating new holes that need to be filled and ground down.

Even though the resurfacing job was completed in May, "We'll be patching those holes for awhile more," Nehls laments.

"I absolutely wish there weren't holes popping out," he says. "But other than that, the floor came out great. It's so shiny that when the employees open the doors in the morning, the sun blinds them."

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The Nitty-Gritty about Nonwoven Diamond Pads

Lat ely, polished concrete floor care with the use of nonwoven diamond floor-pad technology (instead of bonded abrasives) has been promoted at conventions, conferences, and in concrete polishing articles everywhere we turn. Just how important are these pads to our polishing industry?

Nonwoven pads were developed more than 50 years ago by 3M, and they still are a huge seller in the janitorial and sanitation market today. Thanks to newer technology such as diamond impregnation, new opportunities and niche industries have



by Jennifer A. Faller

opened up too. Manufacturers such as 3M, ETC of Henderson Inc., HTC and Onyx Environmental Solutions now offer ranges of nonwoven diamond pads for different cleaning and restoration processes, all for polished concrete and hard surfaces.

These diamond pads are going to make an impact on our industry, and at this point I am not sure that it is an entirely positive one. Some contractors are using these pads as a crutch to get the shine instead of grinding and refining the right way, using the densifier, and polishing up with effective diamond tooling.

The use of diamond pads to get out of a jam or cut corners is often money- or time-motivated. This article is intended to make you think about when and why you should really use these tools. I recommend

that serious concrete polishing craftspeople and trained cleaning professionals buy a set of coarse-to-fine diamond pads and use each for the right reasons and at the opportune time.

First let's agree on some basics.

Nonwoven diamond floor pads are maintenance and cleaning pads that have been dipped or spray-applied with a coating that has billions of microscopic diamond particles in it. These diamonds come in different grit sizes, similar to bonded abrasives or diamond tooling. However, diamond pad systems cost less and are less hassle than traditional diamond-bonded abrasives and equipment or the never-ending "wax, burnish, clean, strip and begin again" floor care routine.

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floor pad is attached to a high-speed propane burnisher or a ride-on or walk-behind scrubber, it rotates while in contact with the concrete floor.

As diamond particles scour the concrete floor surface, they remove some of it, whether they are repairing, refining or shining. Different grits will leave coarser or finer scratches depending upon the hardness of the surface, the weight and rotational speed of the equipment, and the pace across the floor.

The key to mastering diamond pad technology for polished concrete is to learn which pads to use, when and why.

The 200- and 400-grit pads

Diamond pads react differently to different surfaces. It is important to find out what you are working on prior to using these tools. Is a film-forming "guard" applied to the polished concrete as a sacrificial wear surface? Is a nonfilm-forming stain protectant applied to the polished concrete? Or is it just "plain old polished" concrete?

Diamond pads with coarse grits of 200 and 400 are aggressive and should only be used for problem solvers on "plain old polished" concrete. Removing stains, scratches and some surface imperfections gives new life to damaged, heavily worn,

or poorly maintained "plain old polished" concrete floors. However, do not use 200s or 400s on film-forming guard coats, as they will severely scratch, haze and damage the guard coatings. Always remove guards before trying to repair a floor.

Choose between the 200 and 400 grit depending upon the level of damage to the floor and the hardness of the concrete. Test them first. Hint: Use the die-cut "donut hole" from the middle of the pad, along with a variable-speed hand grinder, for testing.

Stepping up to 800 grit

Follow-up diamond grits (800-grit plus) should be used on a decorative slab or where the owner wants some gloss and ease of maintenance. When a higher grit is used, the floor's scratch pattern becomes tighter and more refined. The floor becomes less permeable (making it easier to clean) and shows more reflectivity and clarity.

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How Densifiers Help with Maintenance

In the 1990s, when concrete polishing took off in the United States, silicate hardener/densifiers were rarely used. Now, a concrete floor is not considered properly polished if densifier has not been applied to rejection. Using diamond abrasive tooling alone was not enough for durable polished concrete, and the use of chemistry became a must-do step.

The use of densifiers should also be expected when maintaining polished concrete floors with diamond floor pads.

After using these pads, clean the floor with a slightly alkaline cleaner and water. This will suspend the particulate that was removed during the pad process, break the surface tension and allow you to check for water absorption. If water penetrates and darkens the concrete, so will all other liquids that the floor is exposed to. When a polished concrete floor absorbs water, it is a clear sign that the concrete should be redensified. Or, a conditioner can be applied, although conditioner should not be used over guard coatings or stain protection.

Densification creates more calcium silicate at the surface, which hardens the concrete, prevents further abrasion and degradation, and makes the floor easier to clean and maintain.

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Photo courtesy of 3M

The 800-grit pad can be used either for the intermediate step after the coarse pads, or for the first step of maintenance when floors have not been well-maintained. This pad removes surface residue and small scratches, resulting in a slightly reflective finish.

If a film-forming guard coating has been applied, you must decide to either remove or preserve it. If removing the guard, start from 800s and follow up with the 1,500s.

If preserving the guard coat and applying another, move right up to the more "passive" grits of 1,500 and 3,000.

The higher grit levels

The 1,500- and 3,000-grit pads should be the only grits considered for daily maintenance.


Use the 3,000-grit pads first and observe for a week or two whether they are able to achieve the owner's goals of cleanliness and shine. Once this has been evaluated, adjust your recommendation accordingly.

Think about using these pads the way you think about your first cut on a grind-and-polish — the operator's speed and pace can make a world of difference. And remember, all diamonds scratch the surface, even the 1,500s and 3,000s. In the wrong hands, or with overly aggressive equipment (with too much weight or pad speed), these pads could do more harm than good.

If the polished concrete floor is shining up to expectations and coming clean as needed, then the 3,000s are the ticket. Take the 1,500s with you, which will limit the chances for mistakes.

On the other hand, if the polished concrete is still lacking the desired pop or if the surface is not looking clean enough, then use the 1,500s until the facility manager's goals are achieved.

Once the "clean and shiny" goal has been met, switch to the 3,000s for daily use.

The higher the grit level, the finer the refinement of the scratch pattern will be. A few companies manufacture pads of up to 11,000-grit levels. Consider trying these pads once you have been maintaining a polished concrete floor with 3,000-grit pads for an extended period. The 11,000-grit pads can produce an even glossier wet look that may be desirable in certain facilities. 

Jennifer A. Faller has been in the surface preparation industry for the past 15 years as a decorative concrete contractor, technical consultant and owner of a distribution company. Currently, she is business development manager for Vexcon Chemicals and lead trainer for the Certi-Shine brand of polished concrete materials. Contact her at jfaller@vexcon.com.

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PRODUCT NEWS

Propane-powered machines from Aztec

Aztec Products Inc. has announced the UltraEdge and UltraVac, two new propane-powered machines for concrete floor polishing projects. These two new machines are powered by the Kawasaki 603cc engine, certified by EPA, CARB, LEED and GS-42, and complete the WorkSmart three-piece cordless grinding, polishing and edging system.



The Aztec UltraEdge is an aggressive gear-driven edging machine. Reaching 3 inches under any shelving 5 1/4-inches high, the UltraEdge grinds and polishes within 1/4 inch of walls. The UltraEdge is also equipped with a quick-change

Frankfort plate system, allowing for standardization of plates and diamonds to speed changes between grits and to reduce required inventory.

The UltraVac is a cord-free vacuum that offers 300 cfm and a HEPA Micro-Clean filter.

www.aztecproducts.com



Vacuum-brazed grinding pads

Applied Diamond Tools is proud to introduce vacuum-brazed diamond grinding pads. Combining the aggressiveness of vacuum-brazed diamond cup wheels with the smoothness of diamond polishing pads, the new pads are ideal for creating small radiuses, smoothing out cuts and removing material.

Used with a semirigid back holder, these grinding pads cut smooth, offer low noise and can be vibration-free, especially when compared to standard cup wheels. The 30-grit diamond pads are available in 3-inch, 4-inch, 5-inch and 6-inch sizes, have an optimal speed of up to 5,000 rpm and can be used wet or dry.

www.toolcity.com

Turbo Grinder Leveling Kit now available

The new EDCO Turbo Grinder Leveling Kit ensures level grinding regardless of the height of the accessories being used on EDCO's 10-inch Turbo Grinders.



The kit attaches to the TG-10's rear axle, creating a multilevel grinding machine. It helps the TG-10 remove high spots, uneven joints, epoxy, urethane and other difficult coverings from concrete surfaces.

www.edco.com

Countertop polishing package from Applied Diamond Tools

Applied Diamond Tools has introduced the Kawaii Concrete Countertop Polishing Package. The package includes the Kawaii wet variable-speed WEP110 polisher, 5-inch JHX wet metal-bond diamond polishing pads in 50, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1,500 and 3,000 grits, a 5-inch semirigid back holder, a heavy-duty waterproof apron and goggles.

www.toolcity.com

GranQuartz improves website

GranQuartz announced major improvements in its website, offering new features for searching and purchasing.

One of the key site enhancements is the addition of a digital version of the GranQuartz full stone catalog. Site visitors are able to flip through and search the pages, then place items in a shopping cart for purchase.

The site also offers a redesigned home page.

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pools & hardscaping :

PROJECT PROFILE

The Watergate Hotel Pool Washington, D.C.

by Natasha Chilingirian

About four decades ago, the Watergate Complex in Washington, D.C., was the site of one of the most talked-about political scandals in American history. Today, the luxurious Watergate Hotel, which sits in the complex, houses executives and politicians as well as everyday travelers looking to immerse themselves in American history.

The hotel is also home to a newly resurfaced decorative concrete pool deck that is reportedly sometimes mistaken for real stone.

Desperately in need of a makeover, the pool deck received its treatment from C.J. Salzano of Salzano Custom Concrete, a Centreville, Va.-based contractor specializing in stamped concrete and concrete resurfacing. He used texture and color products from Pure Texture. The result? A textured flagstone pattern, outlined with pool caulking material and accented by hues found in natural rock.

Working toward a pool reopening scheduled for Memorial Day weekend 2011, Salzano faced his initial challenge: 20 years worth of old coatings, including paint, epoxy coatings and a spray overlay. "The deck probably had about four or five layers of coatings that had been put on it over the past 20 years," Salzano says. "We weren't sure what we were dealing with. We were trying to get all of the coatings off and get back down to bare concrete."

That process took about three weeks and involved experimenting with several types



Photos courtesy of Salzano Custom Concrete

of grinders, Salzano says.

Once workers had removed all previous coating remnants, they tackled their second major challenge — cracks. Instead of covering up the cracks, Salzano says, he incorporated them into the stone pattern.

Working with a large design team from The Watergate Hotel, Salzano developed the stone shapes that would cover a total of 6,350 square feet, including the pool deck, a terrace and a landing area. Salzano hand-sketched stone patterns and met regularly with members of the design team, who tweaked and gave final approval to his patterns.

Using tape, workers sealed off the stones' outlines, including the cracks-turned-grout-lines and the additional grout lines that had been agreed upon by the designers. Then, they applied the first layer of texture: Pure Texture's PT Texture White mixed with

an acrylic resin and tinted with a blend of dispersion pigments in brown and gray. The same mixture — with different colors — was applied to texture the grout lines. That batch contained a blend of gray and bluestone dispersion pigments.

Project at a Glance

Client: The Watergate Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Decorative Concrete Contractor: C.J. Salzano, Salzano Custom Concrete, Centreville, Va.

Project Specs: 6,350 total square feet of outdoor textured, colored concrete, comprising a 5,100-square-foot pool deck, 1,200-square-foot terrace and 50-square-foot landing area

Timeline: Six weeks

Material Supplier: Pure Texture

Materials Used: PT Texture White, PT 1 to 1 Acrylic Resin, Thermoplastic Sealer, Dispersion Pigments: Brown, Gray and Bluestone, Accent Powders: Black Jade, Rust, Walnut, Tan and Sand





Pure Texture's system is a polymer-modified grout mix combined with a strengthening polymer resin that's designed to duplicate the look of natural stone. "We have one mix that does it all," Pure Texture owner Dominick Freda says. "It'll work horizontally and vertically and on countertops, and it will even stick to glass."

Freda says Salzano was introduced to the Pure Texture system at one of the company's many training seminars. "He had done a lot of stamped concrete, and he wanted to diversify and get into coatings," Freda says.

Salzano also distinguished each stone with Pure Texture's Accent

Powders, polymer-modified cementitious colorants intended to replicate the natural colors found in stones as well as resist abrasion. He used Black Jade, Rust, Walnut, Tan and Sand. "He rubbed the colors on with a sponge to create a look like veining or shading," Freda says. "It individualized each stone."

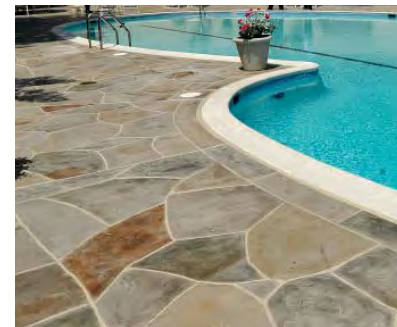
Finally, two coats of Pure Texture's Thermoplastic Sealer were applied. Salzano says the sealer was spiked with a nonskid additive to get a finish similar to sandpaper. On a pool deck, which is often wet, slip resistance is key.

Another company that played a role in the project was Jefferson, Md.-based Stateside Construction Co. (also known as "The Pool Caulking Pros"), which supplied and installed custom-colored pool caulking material after the Pure Texture system installation was complete. Salzano says that Stateside was initially brought in to handle an estimated 900 linear feet of caulking, which included 300 linear feet of caulk in the standard coping joint, 300 linear feet in the expansion joints, and 300 linear feet in random cracks in the concrete slabs. An additional 300 linear feet of cracks appeared during the grinding process, bringing the total number of linear feet caulked to 1,200.

After landscapers added finishing touches with outdoor furniture, the pool area was ready to welcome guests. Salzano says that since the pool's reopening, the only hurdle project managers encountered was minor cracking of the caulking material in about 10 or 15 small spots, which Stateside Construction repaired in a follow-up visit.

Salzano says the pool deck has received a major upgrade. "People had been walking on an old pool deck for so many years, and we've totally transformed the look and feel," he says. "I'd say that the casual visitor thinks they are walking on stones." 🛠️

🌐 www.salzanoconcrete.com



PRODUCT NEWS

Lighting options from Sollos Landscape Lighting

Designed to blend in with and withstand a variety of outdoor environments, Sollos Landscape Lighting, a Halco Lighting Technologies company, offers In-Ground fixtures and Modern Bullet fixtures. Both are compatible with an assortment of LED, energy-saving and extended-life lamps.

Sollos' In-Ground fixtures have a silicone o-ring between the cover and the housing to provide a watertight seal. These fixtures are made with a clear, tempered glass lens for shock and heat resistance and are available with a trim ring or rock guard cover. An adjustable lamp bracket provides plus or minus 15 degrees of tilt for precise beam control. Sollos In-Grounds are available in Composite Black, Antique Brass, Brass and Stainless Steel finishes.

The Modern Bullet fixtures are available in Textured Black, Textured Bronze and Textured Verde finishes in a 6-inch or 7-inch size. Modern Bullet uses two silicone o-rings and a gasketed knuckle to keep out water. A fully adjustable swivel arm sustains desired angles. Heat sink fins inside the fixture provide stabilization for the lamp while dissipating heat and extending the lamp's life. 🛠️

🌐 www.solloslighting.com



staining & coloring CONCRETE :

PROJECT PROFILE

Diane's Beachwear Scottsdale, Ariz.

by *Natasha Chilingirian*

When Ray Anger, owner of Scottsdale, Ariz.-based Decorative Concrete Staining & Scoring Inc., came on board as the decorative concrete contractor for the Scottsdale location of Diane's Beachwear, a California-based chain of upscale beachwear boutiques, he took plans for the store's floor from simple to spectacular. The store's general contractor, Skyline Development & Construction, originally proposed a solid blue epoxy coating, but Anger had something much more eye-catching in mind.

Anger used polymer stains, high-definition visuals and real sand to recreate the look of an ocean floor. He convinced the chain's owner, Diane Biggs, that his plan would result not only in a beautiful, durable surface, but in sales-generating visual marketing for her store too.

"We do a lot of theme-oriented establishments," Anger says. "We believe the floor should tell a story, because when it tells a story, it really intrigues people and creates that wow factor that draws people to the establishment."

Skyline Development & Construction found Decorative Concrete Staining & Scoring online through the Concrete Network website and chose the company to design and install floor coatings for the



Photos courtesy of Decorative Concrete Staining & Scoring Inc.

new store in Scottsdale Quarter, a high-end shopping and entertainment center. Biggs said the Scottsdale store opening presented the perfect opportunity for a special floor treatment — it's the first Diane's Beachwear store located outside of California, and the retail chain is approaching its 50th anniversary.

"I love concrete floors, but some work and some don't," Biggs says. "I wanted to create a tropical vacation for my customers. They're shopping for things to take with them when they go somewhere warm, so I wanted to create that experience."

Anger says he and his crew faced an initial challenge of ensuring the bare concrete inside the store would properly absorb decorative products. After conducting a surface absorption test, Anger

found that since the existing concrete slab had been troweled tightly and topped with a curing compound, it could not absorb stains and sealers.

To prep the surface for decorative coatings, Anger and his crew media-blasted the concrete, using garnet instead of silica sand or shot. This method, used frequently by Decorative Concrete Staining & Scoring, better controls the removal of the surface's top layer and leads to a smooth result, Anger says.

The design process involved persuading Biggs that Anger's vibrant, detailed ocean floor was both doable and a worthwhile investment. After viewing a few of the company's previous artistic jobs, she was sold, Anger says.

"We made some drawings for Diane, and

Project at a Glance

Client: Diane Biggs, Diane's Beachwear, Torrance, Calif.

Decorative Concrete Contractor/Designer: Ray Anger, Decorative Concrete Staining & Scoring Inc., Scottsdale, Ariz.

General Contractor: Skyline Development & Construction, Norco, Calif.

Project Specs: A 1,161-square-foot stained floor with sea-life images and sandbar

Timeline: Two weeks

Colorants Used: Kemiko Rembrandt Polymer Stains

staining & coloring CONCRETE :



she didn't initially think it was possible," he says. "She had a budget for the project, and you have to understand that budgets are fine, but you also get what you pay for. She also had a certain amount of money set aside for marketing, and we had to explain that her floor would become her marketing and create a draw of its own, so in the end, she wouldn't have to spend as much money on marketing."

Marine life in high-def

The crew began with a white base on the entire floor using a Kemiko Rembrandt Polymer Stain. Next, the crew put down Kemiko Rembrandt Polymer Stains in shades of blue to recreate the look of ocean water and applied high-definition images of a large jellyfish, a brain coral reef and a school of tropical fish.

The application process entailed printing photos onto a thin film

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from 3M, then melting and liquefying the printed film under intense heat so it would penetrate the pores of the concrete and become part of the floor.

Finally, the crew used the white stain product to add wave and foam details to the ocean floor. Urethane and polyaspartic coatings finished the water portion.

Next, the crew turned a rectangular-shaped area at the store's entrance into a "beach" by putting down a high-solids epoxy coating as a base and adding a layer of sand. An outline of the Diane's Beachwear logo — the word "Diane's" and a woman lounging in a bikini — was then blasted into the sand and stained using Kemiko Rembrandt Polymer Stain in an eggplant shade. They applied a coating of clear acrylic urethane to lock in the sand and the stained logo.

As the floor would endure abuse from foot traffic and clothing-rack movement, durability was a critical factor. The floor's durability was just not a result of the chosen topcoats, but a consideration



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"The first thing customers notice when they walk in is the floor."

— Diane Biggs, Diane's Beachwear

from the get-go, Anger says. "Making sure you have the right profile and that the products have something to grip to is what leads to strength," he explains. "(The client) had problems with decorative applications in the past that looked beautiful but then broke away because they were not properly prepped."

Anger adds the floor's other key success factors were executing steps in the correct order and protecting the finished product. "We had to make sure we were sequencing the job according to how it needed to be done, and that we protected it before allowing the rest of the work in the store to take place," he says.

Biggs says she loves the results and that the Scottsdale store's floor has become a new signature for Diane's Beachwear.

"The first thing customers notice when they walk in is the floor," she says. "I'm very happy with the creativity, and I've never seen anything like it before. It's like you're walking on water. It's hot in the Arizona desert, and when you walk in the store, you cool off right away."

Details have yet to be finalized, but Anger

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says he plans to work on more Diane's Beachwear stores in the future. Biggs says Anger's work has set the bar for excellence. She believes each new Diane's Beachwear store floor will look even nicer than the last.

"Next time, I'd like to do some starfish on the floor," she says. "I think with each floor we do, the outcome will be better and better."

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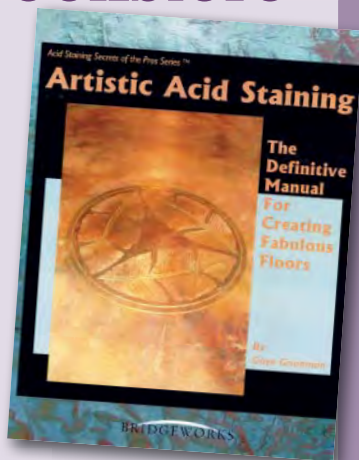


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Staining Recipe

by Kelly O'Brien

Mix and Match

Specialized Concrete Artisans Inc., Waterloo, Wis.
www.specializedinc.net

This versatile staining technique creates a rich mottled finish that can be used on either newly poured, ultra-lightweight concrete or preexisting standard-weight slabs — or on a project that includes both.

Ingredients:

Lycan Inc. ready-mix concrete, with Nova Chemicals Elemix additive mixed in at 40 gallons of Elemix per cubic yard of concrete (the finished slab weighed in at 100 pounds per cubic foot)

Acetone

Rapid Set Skim Coat

Butterfield Color Elements water-based stain:
Cordovan Leather and Brown

Surface 519 Rockshield Primer - Step 1

Surface 519 Rockshield - Step 2

Surface 519 Rock Renew

Special equipment required: McTech Group UltraCure NCF wet-curing blankets, McTech Group EZcover Protective Covering, Innovatech Predator P-2400 grinder with 50- and 100-grit resin-bond diamonds plus buffing pads, SP Systems pump sprayers

Photos courtesy of Specialized Concrete Artisans Inc.



Directions:

► Prep the substrate prior to placing your lightweight slab. In this case, the slab was going down on a wooden deck covered with 1-inch rigid insulation and radiant heat tubes, over which the contractor installed rubber expansion material and a heavy-gauge wire mesh.

► Once your substrate is prepped, place the lightweight mix and let rest overnight.

► The next day place your control joints, then flood the floor and cover it with curing blankets, laying them out as wrinkle-free as possible.

► Let cure for a week, and then remove the curing blankets. Scrub the floor clean and allow it to dry for several hours. Then cover the entire surface with the EZcover so it can be walked on safely while it finishes curing. The curing process should take 21 more days, assuming 28 total days required to cure.

► If you are staining an existing slab as well as the lightweight slab, you'll want to prep the surface and remove any trowel marks by running a grinder with 100-grit diamonds over the old floor to smooth it out.

► Once the lightweight slab has finished curing, you'll grind that as well to prepare it for the stain. For a cement-rich mix like the one used here, use 50-grit abrasives.

► Mask off any surfaces adjoining the areas to be stained, and wash the floors thoroughly.

► On the lightweight floor, start by spraying a mist of acetone across the surface. This will melt any exposed beads from the Elemix additive.

► Mix up a small batch of Skim Coat and trowel it tightly over the floor to fill the small voids left from the Elemix. You may need to use several batches for full coverage.

► Let the Skim Coat set for several hours and then use a buffing pad to remove excess residue from it. Wash off the slab and it's ready to go.

► From this point on, the instructions are identical for the lightweight and the preexisting slabs.

► Mix each color of the Elements stain with water at the standard dosage and pour through a strainer into an SP sprayer fitted with a green No. 4 tip, which will give you a very fine mist.



- ▶ Apply the Cordovan Leather first in a very random and sporadic pattern, going from fairly heavy in some areas to almost nothing in others.
- ▶ Once the Cordovan Leather stain is dry enough to walk on, apply a second treatment of Brown, filling in the lighter areas and lightly misting over the dark ones.
- ▶ Use Q-tips to apply color flush against the walls.
- ▶ Let the stains dry completely.
- ▶ Mix a batch of the Rockshield Primer - Step 1 and strain into an SP sprayer fitted with either a red No. 6 (fine mist) or gray No. 8 (regular mist) tip. Spray an even coat over the entire surface and let dry.
- ▶ Repeat procedure with the Rockshield - Step 2, and let dry overnight.
- ▶ The following morning apply Rock Renew to the surface to provide a final, sacrificial wearing surface that will be fairly simple to maintain. 🛠️

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STAMPING RECIPE

Subtle Stone

Concrete Oasis Inc., Malvern, Pa.
www.concreteoasis.com

by Kelly O'Brien

Ideal for patios, driveways or other expansive exteriors, this stamping technique is all about subtle variations in color and texture, resulting in a realistic stony finish.

Ingredients:

4,000-psi blended stone concrete mix with gray cement

Brickform Color Hardener: Light Gray

Brickform Antique Release: Medium Gray, Smokey Blue

Proline Concrete Tools Seamless Skins: Italian Slate

Brickform Creative Images Texture Mats: Ashlar

Kemiko Stone Tone Stain: Black, Cola, Maylay Tan

Acetone

Klean-Strip Xylene

H&C SharkGrip Slip-Resistant Additive

Kingdom Cure solvent-based cure and seal

Special Equipment Required: Various sizes of disposable brushes, plastic cups, small spray bottles, scrub sponges, ammonia

Directions:

► Once you have your concrete placed, color is your first order of business for this effect. First comes the color hardener, which is installed at a rate of 200 square feet per 60-pound pail. This is about half the recommended amount, but applying it more sparsely results in a mottling effect by letting some of the slab's natural color come through.

► Once the surface of the concrete has lost its sheen, it has set enough for you to apply the release. Blend the Medium Gray and Smokey Blue release at a 1:1 ratio and broadcast over the surface. Don't worry about getting perfectly even coverage — a little bit of variation adds to the finished look.

► Now it's time to begin stamping



Photo courtesy of Concrete Oasis Inc.

with the Ashlar texture mats. For a larger slab (this one was 6,000 square feet, for example), you'll want to have several two-man teams working on stamping sections of the slab simultaneously. For a framed stamp like this, have each team stamp areas of about 1,000 to 1,200 square feet at a time, working from one end of the slab to the other.

► When impressing, vary how much pressure you use, as it varies the look and makes the texture look more natural.

► Also, in addition to the Ashlar stamps, take your Italian Slate skins and apply lightly, at random, to give a little more natural variation to the stones.

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- ▶ Once the entire surface has been stamped, let cure overnight.
- ▶ The next day wash down the area with a pressure washer and a broom to remove any loose release from the concrete.
- ▶ While the surface is drying, mix up your acids. You'll use a variety of mixes here:
 - Black, mixed 3:1 with acetone
 - Cola, undiluted

- Cola, mixed 1:1 with acetone
- Maylay Tan, undiluted
- Maylay Tan, mixed 1:1 with acetone

You'll want to have some of each of these blends in small spray bottles and plastic cups. In addition to spraying the surface, you'll be doing some detail work with small paintbrushes, which is when the cups of stain will come in handy.

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PRODUCT NEWS

Compass medallion series from Butterfield

Butterfield Color's team of craftspeople worked with actual slate, stone and cobble to create the design and layout of the company's compass medallion series.

The series is comprised of the 48-inch Compass Rose, the 48-inch Windrose and the 96-inch Windrose.

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stamping & texturing CONCRETE

► Now, since this look is going for a natural stone finish, it's often useful to study pictures of the type of rock you're trying to emulate. Using your research as your guide, get creative with your acid application!

► For this project, Concrete Oasis started out by giving different guys sprayers filled with different colors and having them apply stain until all of the stones had gotten some color. Once they finished their first pass, they took a step back to study the surface. The next step was to go and add a second coat, often of a different color, to just half of the stones, chosen at random. Then, with cups and paintbrushes, they went out and added accents to the low areas and high areas in the surface.

► After all your color is added, go through with scrub sponges and knock down some of the color. Don't scrub too hard, as you are looking to just let some of the gray come through. The acid comes off the high spots first while remaining in the dips, which creates a very natural effect.

► Neutralize the entire surface with water and ammonia and let dry completely.

► Now it's time for finishing touches. Start by mixing a 16-ounce bottle of SharkGrip into one gallon of xylene. This will help the slip-resistance additive stay suspended in the sealer.

► Add the mix to the 4 gallons of Kingdom Cure sealer and mix thoroughly.

► Apply 3 coats of this mixture to the entire surface, letting it dry for 20 to 30 minutes between applications, and you're all set. 🛠️

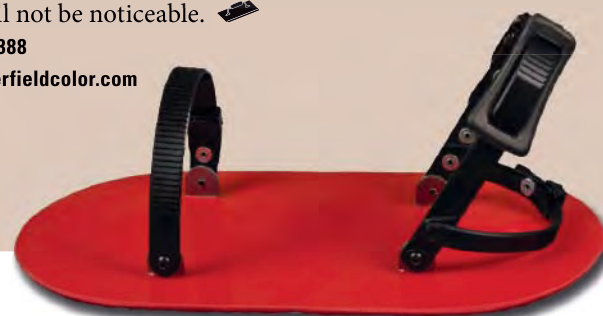
PRODUCT NEWS

Shoes allow for earlier texturing

Butterfield Color's new Get On It Shoes are designed to help distribute the weight of the stamping professional evenly over a larger area, so that it is possible to get on and stamp with texture mats earlier. The bottom surface of the shoes is textured, so if someone slips off a mat, the footprint will not be noticeable. 🛠️

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Stamping Recipe

by Kelly O'Brien

Rustic Chic

Becker Architectural Concrete,
Woodbury, Minn.
www.beckerconcrete.com

A bluestone-stamped field trimmed with richly stained faux beams, this technique is perfectly suited for any room with an upscale rustic theme.

Ingredients:

Roadware 10 Minute Concrete Mender
Weld-Crete concrete bonding agent
Aggregate Industries 4,500-psi topping
mix, with:

- BASF low-range water-reducing admixture, at 3 ounces per hundredweight of cement
- standard 1 percent dosage of Solomon Colors ColorFlo liquid integral color: Canvas

Legacy Accent Liquid Release

L.M. Scofield Lithochrome Antiquing
Release: Charcoal

Proline Boardwalk Wood Plank Stamps:
12 inches by 48 inches

Proline Concrete Tools Seamless
Texture Skins: Blue Stone

Legacy Fresco Stain: Hickory

L.M. Scofield Lithochrome Chemstain Classic:
Faded Terracotta, Dark Walnut

Baking soda (for neutralizing)

ChemSystems CSI Concrete Dye: Elkhorn

Acetone (for dilution)

W.R. Meadows Decra-Seal

Butcher's Iron Stone floor finish



Photo courtesy of Becker Architectural Concrete

Special equipment required: 1/8-inch concrete
edger, terry-cloth staining pads, wax
applicator mop

Directions:

► This application was tested as a topping poured over a rough slab with radiant-heating tubes. If you also intend to install on a slab, your first step is going to be to clean the existing surface thoroughly, especially any cracks in the substrate.

► Apply the Roadware mender to any cracks and let set.

► Use 2-by-4s to block off 12-inch-wide borders and dividers. These will be the accent spaces that you'll stamp with the plank pattern.

► Apply a thin coat of Weldcrete bonding agent to the substrate.

► Pour your topping mix into the borders and dividers at a depth of 3/8 inch.

► Mix 3 gallons of liquid release with 12 ounces of the Charcoal powdered release.

► Using Boardwalk stamps and the release mixture, stamp all of the border and divider areas.

► Let the concrete cure overnight.

► The next day, strip the 2-by-4 forms and cover the borders with painter's

plastic sheeting.

► Pour the remainder of the floor (using the same topping mix), being careful to keep it flush with the borders.

► Use a 1/8-inch concrete edger around the seams next to the borders to give them nice clean edges.

► Using just the clear release, stamp the remainder of the floor with the blue-stone texture skins.

► Let cure overnight and return the next day to remove the plastic sheeting and to saw-cut control joints.

► Let the floor cure for three weeks before you come back with stains and dyes.

► When your three weeks are up, wash floor thoroughly with water, and use a stiff brush to remove any residue left over from the release.

► Mix the Hickory Fresco Stain at 4 parts stain to 1 part water.

► Spray Hickory stain in an even coat over the entire floor, including the borders and dividers.

► Mix, in another sprayer, a batch of the Faded Terracotta Chemstain half and half with water and fill yet another sprayer with water. Spray a coat of the stain across the entire surface, while also spraying water on the floor, to diffuse the color.

► Let stains dry, and then clean off the residue with a solution of water and baking soda, mixing a 1-pound box into every 10 gallons of water.

► Mix up a batch of the Elkhorn Concrete Dye, using one 5-ounce bottle of concentrate per 1 gallon of acetone, and spray at random across the surface.

► On the borders, using a terry-cloth staining pad, apply the Dark Walnut Chemstain by hand to deepen the shadows in those areas a bit.

► Neutralize and clean the floor and let dry overnight.

► Apply three coats of Decra-Seal to the floor, letting each coat dry completely before applying the next one.

► Finally, use your wax applicator mop to apply a coat of Iron Stone floor finish. 🧼

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CONCRETE walls :

PRODUCT FOCUS

SpiderLath from SpiderLath Inc.

If you apply vertical concrete, carve concrete walls or create cast pieces, sooner or later you may have to face a painful truth: Traditional metal lath can be troublesome. It's heavy, can be difficult to shape and is incredibly sharp when cut. SpiderLath, a new fiberglass mesh from a company of the same name, addresses those problems.

"We were installers of metal lath and very well-acquainted with the negative aspects of using metal. That's what led us to come up with this alternative," says Wayne Love. Love developed the product with two other partners, and is now co-owner of the SpiderLath company.

SpiderLath can be used with stucco, manufactured stone, veneer stone and a variety of concrete applications such as flooring, countertops, walls and vertical sculptures. Because of the bond that forms between SpiderLath and a cementitious coating, you will not have the stress cracking associated with metal reinforcement, Love says.

Additionally, code requirements state that when installing lath, it needs to be 1/4 inch from the wall to allow the mortar to encapsulate it. In order to meet the standards, SpiderLath has foam strips on the



Photos courtesy of SpiderLath Inc.

back to keep it from sitting flush against a wall. "Even metal lath didn't follow this code," Love says.

But perhaps the best part about SpiderLath is its ease of use. For starters, the product comes in a 4-foot by 75-foot roll that only weighs 20 pounds. The equivalent amount of metal lath would weigh approximately 90 pounds. Additionally, installation time is reduced to about half that of traditional metal lath because SpiderLath comes

PRODUCT NEWS

Accessories from Butterfield aid wall texturing and carving

Three new vertical-texture and carving tools from Butterfield Color simplify the art of replicating natural stonework with vertical overlays. The unique tools were designed to work with Butterfield Color's Cantera Vertical Wall Mix and can be used with other vertical systems as well.

The tools are the 9-inch Pitted Rock Face Roller, the 9-inch Rock Face Roller and the Knife Edge Joint Roller and Carving Tool. Use them separately or together to compliment and expedite all your vertical applications.

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CONCRETE walls :

in a roll instead of sheets. The roll also makes it easier to shape into something unique for, say, sculptures.

Contractors are warming to SpiderLath's ability to be cut, too. "It's easy to cut with just a knife or scissors instead of tin snips," Love says.

Because it's made of fiberglass, the freshly cut edges aren't as sharp, making it safe to work with.

Despite all of the advantages that SpiderLath offers, there are no unique issues contractors need to know about when using it, Love says. "It's a little bit more flexible,



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but if they are using to using metal the installation procedures are all the same. Even though it's a new product, they don't need to be reeducated on how to put it on the wall." 🛠️

🌐 www.spiderlath.com



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2012 decorative concrete training guide

WELCOME to Concrete Decor magazine's fifth annual Decorative Concrete Training Guide – the industry's go-to source for training in virtually every aspect of decorative concrete. Whether you are interested in learning new skills or refining techniques you and your staff already use, this Training Guide will point you in the right direction.

The Training Guide identifies training that fits the specific needs of experts, beginners and everyone in between. It can direct you to Spanish-language training services, online webinars, books, DVDs and on-site training. It can even point you to opportunities for AIA credit.

This print Training Guide tells you which service providers offer different types of training. The online Training & Events

Calendar at ConcreteDecor.net tells you when and where classes are being held. Online calendar information is updated on a daily basis.

Have questions? Give Concrete Decor a call at (877) 935-8906.

**Find and use the
Training & Events Calendar
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concrete coatings

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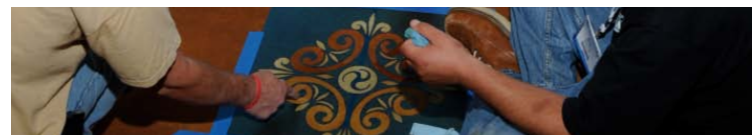
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www.concretedecorshow.com

The Concrete Decor Show features hands-on workshops and classroom training in all areas of decorative concrete, plus an extensive exhibit hall with live demonstrations from industry leaders. Our third annual event will be held February 20 – 24, 2012 at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas. The exhibit hall will be open Wednesday through Friday, and training courses will be held throughout the week.

See our ad on page 19

Concrete Solutions
9151 Rehco Rd.
San Diego, CA 92121

(800) 422-2603
www.concretesolutions.com

Concrete Solutions has been a leader in the concrete resurfacing industry since 1986 and has spent the last two decades developing products and systems to restore and resurface concrete to its original condition while also providing customers with a more decorative solution.

See our ads on pages 17 & 25 • Reader Service 03 & 11

Concrete Texturing Tool & Supply
45 Underwood Rd.
Throop, PA 18512

(570) 489-6025
www.concrete-texturing.com

Decorative concrete tools, supplies, and training for the professional installer.

See our ad on page 60 • Reader Service 69

E

Elite Crete Midsouth
536 Airport Rd.
Hot Springs, AR 71913

(501) 282-7719
www.elitecretemidsouth.com

For more than 10 years Elite Crete Midsouth has been providing training, technical support and sales for the use and application of Elite Crete Systems products.

Elite Crete New England LLC
1400 East St.
Pittsfield, MA 0120

(413) 464-2811
www.elitecrete.com

Elite Crete New England is the premier source for Elite Crete Systems products and training for all of New England and New York. We carry the most innovative, trusted products the industry has to offer for decorative concrete overlays, stamped concrete, concrete coloring, concrete repair, industrial epoxy systems and custom flooring solutions.

Elite Crete of Indiana
647 Sayre Ct., Ste. C
Greenwood, IN 46143

(317) 888-4440
www.elitecreteindiana.com

Elite Crete of Indiana provides training, technical support and product sales to contractors in the central Midwest area. In addition to coatings, our polymer overlay systems product line includes thin stamped, slate trowel textures, microfinishes, countertops and vertical applications. Training options from beginner to experienced are available. Call us!

Elite Crete of the Ohio Valley
2323 Scioto Harper Dr.
Columbus, OH 43204

(614) 440-0599
www.elitecreteohiovalley.com

Elite Crete of the Ohio Valley is the factory-authorized distributor and training center of Elite Crete Products serving Ohio, West Virginia, and Western Pennsylvania. Visit our website, www.EliteCreteOhioValley.com, to learn more about our product line and our monthly training programs and schedule.

Elite Crete SoCal
9259 Archibald Ave.
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

(909) 843-5483
www.elitecrete.com

Elite Crete Systems Inc. authorized certification training, distribution and technical support for California decorative concrete installers.

elite crete systems

Elite Crete Systems
1061 Transport Dr.
Valparaiso, IN 46383

(219) 465-7671
www.elitecrete.com

Manufacturer of products for complete decorative concrete overlay systems, epoxy and urethane industrial floor coatings and concrete surface restoration and protection. More than 90 offices worldwide.

See our ad on page 27 • Reader Service 16

Elite Crete Systems Midwest Inc.
4838 W 128th Pl.
Alsip, IL 60803

(708) 629-0825
www.elitecrete.com

Manufacturer of products for complete decorative concrete overlay systems, epoxy and urethane industrial floor coatings and concrete surface restoration and protection. More than 90 offices worldwide.

Elite Crete Texas
783 N. Grove Rd., Ste. 110
Richardson, TX 75081
(214) 575-7500
www.elitecretetexas.com

enCOUNTER
125 NE 40th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

(866) 906-2006
www.encountertop.com

Training with enCOUNTER allows contractors to learn how to form, mix, color and seal the strongest professional comprehensive countertop system. All classes are hands-on, allowing students to leave with the confidence they can use on the job.

See our ad on page 37 • Reader Service 33

G

GG Innovative Products
20981 Yeoman Rd.
Bend, OR 97701

(503) 719-8580
www.gginnovativeproducts.com

Manufacturer of high-quality stains, dyes, sealers, overlays, and finish wax. These products are formulated to stand up to the test of time.

See our ads on page 59 • Reader Service 56, 57 & 58



Gnomeadic Arts
2318 S. Vineyard Ave., Ste. A
Ontario, CA 91761

(909) 947-6474
www.gnomeadicarts.com

Gnomeadic Arts is a unique company with more than 20 years in concrete and construction. We offer on- and off-site training, consulting for your business, branding and marketing, mix designs, custom mold making, shop ergonomics and tricks to save you time and money, all at a price you can afford.

I

Increte Systems, Inc.
1611 Gunn Hwy.
Odessa, FL 33556

(813) 886-8811
www.increte.com

Increte Systems is the decorative concrete industry's only full-service manufacturer, providing the industry's most complete line of decorative products, tools and training.

Innovatech Products & Equipment
832 80th St. S.W.
Everett, WA 98203

(425) 402-1881
www.innovatechproducts.com

Innovatech Products & Equipment has been educating contractors for over a decade. It continues the education process through the Innovatech Institute, focusing on the fundamentals of grinding and polishing. Innovatech is the leading surface-preparation equipment manufacturer of the Terminator, Ride-On Floor Scraper, and Predator, Planetary Grinder/Polisher.

See our ad on page 47 • Reader Service 47



International Polished Concrete Institute
P.O. Box 1174, 184 Cedar Pl.
Norris, TN 37828

(865) 494-7881
www.ipcionline.org

Created specifically to educate architects, engineers and contractors about polished concrete, the Institute is an unparalleled resource for the new and growing industry. It offers extensive training and industry resources, allowing members to stay on the cutting edge of this rapidly advancing field.

K

Kemiko Decorative & Industrial
13210 E. Barton Cir.
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90605

(800) 875-4596
www.kemiko.com

See our ad on page 30 • Reader Service 19

L



LATICRETE
One Laticrete Park N.
Bethany, CT 06524

(203) 393-0010
www.laticrete.com

LATICRETE is a global manufacturer and leader of premium installation and finishing systems for the building industry.

N

NewLook International Inc.
1525 S. Gladiola St., Ste. 8
Salt Lake City, UT 84104

(801) 915-4675
www.getnewlook.com

The leading manufacturer of premium architectural and specialty decorative concrete product solutions. Our superior coating and polishing systems have been proven since 1989 by industry professionals and property owners alike to restore and enhance the image of concrete. Whether you are specifying or installing decorative concrete, NewLook has the right solution for you! Visit www.GetNewLook.com for our training schedule.

See our ad on page 56 • Reader Service 61

Q

Quest Building Products
1129 N Patt St.
Anaheim, CA 92801

(714) 738-6640
www.questbuilding.com

Quest Building Products is California's full-service store specializing in decorative concrete products to prepare, protect and decorate any concrete surface. Offering tools and coatings, Quest also provides equipment sales, service and rental. With a knowledgeable staff and the support of reputable and dependable manufacturers, Quest is your one-stop shop.

W



Wagner Meters
326 Pine Grove Rd.
Rogue River, OR 97537

(541) 582-0541
www.wagnermeters.com/webinar_info.php

Wagner Meters has recently released this comprehensive webinar, entitled "Measuring Moisture in Concrete Slabs." This free webinar is presented by Howard Kanare, Senior Principal Scientist for CTLGroup, a subsidiary of the Portland Cement Association. This free presentation brings you the most up-to-date information on accurate moisture testing of concrete slabs. This free webinar is available by invitation only and seating is limited. Please email rapidrh@wagnermeters.com or call (541) 582-0541 to receive your invitation to this ground-breaking webinar.

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 (604) 629-8700
www.werkmaster.com

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Westcoat Specialty Coating Systems
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San Diego, CA 92102

(800) 250-4519
www.westcoat.com

With more than 30 years of industry experience, Westcoat offers innovative, durable surface solutions for the discriminating architect, contractor, specifier or property owner. Take the guesswork out of selecting and applying coatings with Westcoat's simplified solution for every type of coating application. Westcoat Specialty Coating Systems — an all-inclusive line of step-by-step coating products — make selecting the right process for every job even easier. Engineered to achieve superior results, Westcoat delivers numerous protective, textured and decorative options for a variety of applications. Westcoat offers superior customer service, technical support and training tools, including On-the-Road Demos and installation training videos.

See our ad on page 29 • Reader Service 23

R

R.A.T. Training (Big Bamboo Studios)
 515 5th St.
 Fairbury, NE 68352

(402) 806-1378
www.bigbamboostudios.com

Our mission at R.A.T. Training is to provide an interactive, educational platform for rock carvers, artists and theme builders using a variety of mediums and inspiring design. Through networking and hands-on training we aim to inspire creativity and innovation through our diverse classes in three-dimensional decorative concrete.

S

Solomon Colors Inc./Brickform
 11061 Jersey Blvd.
 Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

(800) 483-9628
www.brickform.com

BRICKFORM has easy-to-use systems that work seamlessly together to resurface and restore aging concrete or to create new colored and textured hardscapes. BRICKFORM systems include: coloring, staining, imprinting, sealing systems, and all the companion accessories to complete the job. Visit us at www.brickform.com.

The Stamp Store
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Oklahoma City, OK 73105

(888) 848-0059
www.thestampstore.com

The Stamp Store has been training concrete artisans for more than 10 years. Our Stamp Store instructors specialize in training classes for countertops, vertical stamping and carving, overlays, fresh pours, stamping, and One Day Floors applications. All classes are hands-on, allowing the student to experience the satisfaction of a completed project.

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Super-Krete
 1290 N. Johnson Ave., #101
 El Cajon, CA 92020

(619) 401-8282
www.super-krete.com

Super-Krete gives you a range of products to meet the challenge of any project. Super-Krete manufactures simple-to-use products of the highest quality and versatility for the preservation, renovation and beautification of concrete in the industry today.

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(888) 872-7759
www.surfacegeltek.com

SDVOSB / WOSB – Manufacturer of gelled products used for concrete cleaning, etching and profiling. Introducing Pre Grind. Use our products on old/new concrete. Pre Grind is perfect for pre-grinding prior to decorative polishing. We also offer vinyl adhesive "graphics on demand," stock/custom, unlimited in design/size. Brainstorming/technical support are our specialties. Call us anytime!

See our ad on page 55 • Reader Service 66

V

Versatile Building Products
245 Carl Karcher Way
Anaheim, CA 92801

www.lifetimedecorativeconcrete.com

Versatile Building Products, Inc. manufactures decorative concrete floor coatings and high-performance clear sealers. Our extensive product line includes Versa-Crete 1/8" Stamped Overlays and Microtoppings available with a lifetime adhesion warranty. Another popular line is our Roll on Rock garage floor coating that can be installed in as little as a few hours.

See our ads on pages 31, 34 & 57 •
 Reader Service 18, 28 & 55

VerticalArtisans

Vertical Artisans
 7915 W. 90th St.
 Hickory Hills, IL 60457

(708) 233-9394
www.verticalartisans.com

Vertical Artisans is an online subscription site that illustrates the methods, styles and techniques of hand-carved vertical decorative concrete. Please visit our site and join our free forum for updates and events.



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 Philadelphia, PA 19135

(888) VEX-CON1
www.vexcon.com

Certi-Shine is a leading global brand for polished concrete. Attend the training seminar that everyone is talking about; fine-tune your techniques and become certified to install Certi-Shine FSR (food-stain resistant) technology and our interior and exterior silicate Micro Stain as well as FUSION, the latest in polished concrete repair.

Industry Sales Leader Braxton-Bragg asks you...

Could Owning the "Fastest Machine on the Planet" Also Add to Your Bottom Line?

Fact is, the number one variable and the single biggest factor in how much cash you add to the bottom line of each concrete floor-polishing job is labor.

In other words, if you can save time on each and every job, then you will make more money on each and every job.

**Purchase a new LAVINA PRO machine
and get a 9565CV Makita® Grinder **Absolutely FREE!****

It's not enough to lower the cost of your pads and chemicals. You have to get your labor costs under control to really make money in the floor polishing business.

Here at Braxton-Bragg, we could sell concrete polishing systems from anyone. Yet, we chose to stand behind **LAVINA** by Superabrasive.

Why? Quite simply, it's a better-built machine.

Because LAVINA PRO machines:

- Grind, hone, polish and burnish – [no other machine needed.](#)
- Offer the option of polishing just the cream, or exposing the aggregates for polishing – [no need for separate equipment.](#)
- LAVINA 32" features 6 heads – [covers more ground more easily making it the fastest machine on the planet.](#)
- Tooling is interchangeable across several product sizes – [less tooling to carry to each jobsite.](#)
- LAVINA hugs to within 1/8 inch of the walls – [fewer labor intensive passes with a smaller machine.](#)
- One-of-a-kind "quick change" tooling system – [change tooling in seconds not minutes.](#)
- Headlights for working in dark warehouses or low light situations – [no more skipped or missed spots.](#)
- Works Dry – [less time between steps, less clean-up time, less hazardous by-product, cleaner jobsite.](#)
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- Plus many more quality, time saving and money making features...

Call one of our in house LAVINA experts at **1-800-575-4401** today for more on how you could increase your bottom line by giving one of the LAVINA PRO machines a try on your next job.



Item #	Description	Everyday LOW Price
18994	Lavina 20N Pro Floor Grinding/Pol. Machine 208-240 V, 1 OR 3-Phase, 50-60Hz, Var. Speed 300-1,100 RPM, 7.5 HP, 30 AMP LV-20-N-PRO	\$6,350.00
18996	Lavina 25 Pro Floor Grinding/Pol. Machine 208-240 V, 1-Phase or 3-Phase, 50-60 Hz, VS 300-1,100 RPM, 10 HP, 30 Amp, LV-25-PRO	\$9,975.00
17708	Lavina 30L Pro Concrete Prep Machine 208-240 V, 3-Phase Variable Speed 300-1,100 RPM, 15 HP, 45 Amp, 30L-PRO	\$14,239.00
17707	Lavina 30G Pro Propane Concrete Prep & Polish Machine, 18 HP, 603cc Kawasaki, Propane 650-1,100 RPM, 30G-PRO	\$16,000.00
19000	Lavina 32 Pro Floor Polishing Machine 230 V, 3-Phase, 50-60 Hz, Variable Speed 300-1,100 RPM, 20 HP, 60 Amp, LV-32-PRO	\$18,000.00

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